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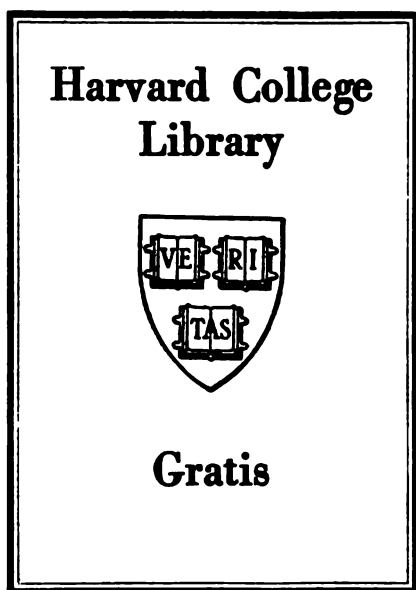
BRITISH POETS  
OF THE NINETEENTH  
CENTURY

PAGE





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# BRITISH POETS

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY

POEMS BY

WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE, SCOTT, BYRON, SHELLEY, KEATS, LANDOR,  
TENNYSON, ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING, ROBERT BROWNING,  
CLOUGH, ARNOLD, ROSSETTI, MORRIS, SWINBURNE

EDITED, WITH REFERENCE LISTS AND NOTES

BY

CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE, PH.D.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

*REVISED EDITION*

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BENJ. H. SANBORN & CO.,

BOSTON

NEW YORK

CHICAGO

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1945

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To M. E. H.



## PREFACE

This volume makes no attempt to do what has already been so excellently done in Mr. Stedman's *Victorian Anthology*, Ward's *English Poets*, and other similar collections. It is not a new Anthology of nineteenth century poetry. Instead of giving a few "gems," or "flowers" from each one of several hundred authors, it includes only the fifteen chief poets of the century. From each one of these, however, it attempts to give a full and adequate selection, sufficient really to represent the man and his work.

The book has been planned, primarily, to give in one volume all the material which should be in the hands of the student for a College or University course on the British poets of the nineteenth century. I have therefore tried to include, first, all the poems which would be given as prescribed reading in such a course; and, second, a thorough guide to the use of a well-equipped college or public library, in connection with that reading. I hope the book may also be found useful for more general courses on English Literature, for which there is no other collection covering exactly this part of the field; and for any reader who wishes to possess in one volume the best work of the chief nineteenth century poets—"Infinite riches in a little room."

The selections are very full, and for the most part consist of complete poems. They are designed both to give all the best of each poet's work, and also (except for Mrs. Browning) to give some representation of each important period and class of his work. Long poems are usually given entire, and space has been found for Byron's *Manfred*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Scott's *Marmion*, Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, Keats' *Hyperion*, Tennyson's *Guinevere* and *Morte d'Arthur*, Browning's *Pippa Passes*, Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, Morris's *Atalanta's Race*, etc., etc. In general, extracts from long poems are not given, except in the case of single cantos which are complete in themselves, like the last two cantos of *Childe Harold*; or lyrics, such as the songs from Tennyson's dramas, or the Hymns to Pan and Diana in Keats' *Endymion*, which, when detached, make perfect and independent poems. An exception has been



made in the case of Byron's master-work, *Don Juan*, which of course could not be given in full, and which has been represented by long passages.

The amount of space given to an author does not necessarily correspond with his relative importance or rank as a poet. Some authors can best be represented by their shorter poems, while others—Scott, for instance, and William Morris—could not be fairly represented at all unless one of their longer poems were given. Browning and Byron could not be represented without some complete example of their poems in dramatic form, while Tennyson's drama does not hold the same relative importance in his work. Byron, in particular, cannot really be known except through his longer poems; some example must necessarily be given of the series of Oriental Romances, which, with *Childe Harold*, won him his early fame; at least one Canto of *Childe Harold* must be given complete; an example of the great Satires must be known in the *Vision of Judgment*; and finally the whole man is summed up in the different aspects of *Don Juan*. Wordsworth, on the other hand, has less space than poets of inferior rank; but he is represented by a hundred complete poems, the largest number given for any author.

The selection of shorter poems has been made generously inclusive. For Browning, more than two-thirds of the *Dramatic Lyrics*, and more than half of the *Dramatic Romances* and *Men and Women*, as well as representative poems from the other collections, are given. For Keats, the entire contents (except one poem) of the volume of 1820 is given, as well as full representation of his earlier volumes and of the posthumous poems. I have included nearly eighty poems from Landor, and hope that this—I think the first—representative selection from his verse may serve to make his work as a poet more familiarly known, in the sheer beauty of its simplicity and condensation. No apology need be made, I hope, for the extent of the Shelley selections, since his *Alastor*, *Lines Written among the Euganean Hills*, *Epipsychidion*, *The Sensitive Plant*, *Adonais*, etc., as well as the *Prometheus Unbound*, make his work take a large amount of space in proportion to the number of titles. For Rossetti, I have given more than two-thirds of the sonnets from the *House of Life*, as well as *Sister Helen*, *The Stream's Secret*, *Love's Nocturn*, *The Burden of Nineveh*, *The King's Tragedy*, and some thirty or forty of the shorter poems. I hope that the space devoted to him will be found to represent a true judgment of his great permanent value as a poet; and that the same will be true of the still larger amount of space given to the poet most different from him, Matthew Arnold.

A principal feature of the volume is the classified *Reference Lists*. I have tried to indicate, for each poet, the standard editions, other important editions, the best one-volume editions, the standard biography, the best brief biography, and all the important essays. The critical essays are usually classed in two paragraphs, and, throughout, the most important books or essays are indicated by asterisks.

The Notes have been made as few and brief as possible; and critical comment, except that of the poet himself, or, in a few cases, of other poets, has been excluded from them. They give only essential *facts* regarding the poems, or comment and explanation added by the poet himself.

The poems are arranged in chronological order under each author, according to the dates of writing when these are known, and in other cases according to the dates of publication. The dates are given after each poem, dates of writing being indicated by italic figures, and dates of publication by upright figures.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the ready generosity with which critics and teachers have given their help in making the selections. My thanks are due, in particular, to Mr. Paul E. More of the *New York Evening Post*, to Professor Stoddard of New York University, Professor Trent and Professor Odell of Columbia University, Professor Baker and Professor Sykes of Teachers' College, Professor van Dyke of Princeton, and Professor Mott of the College of the City of New York.

It can hardly be hoped that such a book as this will be entirely free from errors, especially in the reference lists and dates. Any corrections will be gratefully received. Most of the proof has been carefully read three times, but—as my friend Ronsard hath it—*Tu excuseras les fautes de l'imprimeur, car tous les yeux d'Argus n'y verraient assez clair.*

CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY,  
September, 1904.

## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

IN the present edition a number of typographical errors have been corrected, the text and dates of some poems have been verified by comparison with more authoritative editions than were available when the book was first published, an Index of First Lines has been added to the Author-Index and Title-Index, and the Reference Lists have been thoroughly revised and brought up to date. I am under obligation to several friends who have sent me corrections and especially suggestions for the improvement of the Reference Lists: in particular to Professor Lane Cooper, Professor Frank E. Farley, Miss Henriette E. Moore, Professor A. B. Milford, Professor Richard Jones, and Professor Charles W. Hodell; and I take this opportunity to thank the many other teachers who have written me concerning their use of the book. It is a pleasure to know that the general plan and method of the book, and of the Reference Lists, have been found helpful; and though these have been only too generously flattered by imitation, it is also a pleasure to note that no similar collection has ventured to include so much as one-third the material offered by the present volume.

C. H. P.

*September, 1910.*

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

DURING the six years Dr. Page's *BRITISH POETS* has been before the educational public nearly one hundred Colleges and Universities, including practically all of those of the first rank, have used the book in classes. It takes the place of at least fifteen ordinary volumes. In its revised form, and on its especially prepared Bible paper, we bespeak for the new edition a larger sale and field of usefulness.

BENJ. H. SANBORN & Co.

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## WORDSWORTH

### LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part of the shore, commanding a beautiful prospect.

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead. The tree has disappeared, and the slip of Common on which it stood, that ran parallel to the lake and lay open to it, has long been enclosed; so that the road has lost much of its attraction. This spot was my favorite walk in the evenings during the latter part of my school-time.

(*Wordsworth's note.*)

NAY, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands  
Far from all human dwelling: what if here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb?  
What if the bee love not these barren boughs?  
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,  
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind  
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.  
    Who he was  
That piled these stones and with the mossy sod  
First covered, and here taught this aged Tree  
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,  
I well remember.—He was one who owned  
No common soul. In youth by science nursed,  
And led by nature into a wild scene  
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth  
A favored Being, knowing no desire  
Which genius did not hallow; 'gainst the taint  
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,  
And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,

All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,  
Owed him no service; wherefore he at once  
With indignation turned himself away,  
And with the food of pride sustained his soul  
In solitude.—Stranger! these gloomy boughs  
Had charms for him; and here he loved to sit,  
His only visitants a straggling sheep,  
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper:  
And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,  
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,  
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour  
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here  
An emblem of his own unfruitful life:  
And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze  
On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis  
Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became  
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain  
The beauty, still more beautiful! Nor, that time,  
When nature had subdued him to herself,  
Would he forget those Beings to whose minds,  
Warm from the labors of benevolence,  
The world, and human life, appeared a scene  
Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh,  
Inly disturbed, to think that others felt  
What he must never feel: and so, lost Man!  
On visionary views would fancy feed,  
Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale

He died,—this seat his only monument.  
 If Thou be one whose heart the holy  
 forms  
 Of young imagination have kept pure,  
 Stranger! henceforth be warned; and  
 know that pride,  
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
 Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt  
 For any living thing, hath faculties  
 Which he has never used; that thought  
 with him  
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
 The least of Nature's works, one who  
 might move  
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds  
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!  
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to  
 love;  
 True dignity abides with him alone  
 Who, in the silent hour of inward  
 thought,  
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
 In lowliness of heart. 1787–1796. 1798.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning.—(Wordsworth.)

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,  
 Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has  
 sung for three years;  
 Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and  
 has heard  
 In the silence of morning the song of  
 the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails  
 her? She sees  
 A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;  
 Bright volumes of vapor through Loth-  
 bury glide,  
 And a river flows on through the vale  
 of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst  
 of the dale,

<sup>1</sup> Italic figures indicate the year of writing; upright figures the year of publication. The dates for Wordsworth are taken from the latest editions of William Knight, A. J. George, and Thomas Hutchinson.

Down which she so often has tripped  
 with her pail;  
 And a single small cottage, a nest like a  
 dove's,  
 The one only dwelling on earth that she  
 loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven:  
 but they fade,  
 The mist and the river, the hill and the  
 shade:  
 The stream will not flow, and the hill  
 will not rise,  
 And the colors have all passed away  
 from her eyes! 1797. 1800.

#### A NIGHT-PIECE

Composed on the road between Nether Stowey and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly recollect the very moment when I was struck, as described — "He looks up—the clouds are split," etc. (Wordsworth)

"Wordsworth particularly recommended to me among his Poems of Imagination, *Yew Trees*, and a description of Night. These, he says, are amongst the best for the imaginative power displayed in them." (*Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson*, May 9, 1815.)

———THE sky is overcast  
 With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
 Heavy and wan, all whitened by the  
 Moon.  
 Which through that veil is indistinctly  
 seen,  
 A dull, contracted circle, yielding light  
 So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,  
 Chequering the ground—from rock,  
 plant, tree, or tower.  
 At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
 Startles the pensive traveller while he  
 treads  
 His lonesome path, with unobserving  
 eye  
 Bent earthward; he looks up—the  
 clouds are split  
 Asunder,—and above his head he sees  
 The clear Moon, and the glory of the  
 heavens.  
 There, in a black-blue vault she sails  
 along,  
 Followed by multitudes of stars, that,  
 small  
 And sharp, and bright, along the dark  
 abyss  
 Drive as she drives: how fast they  
 wheel away,  
 Yet vanish not!—the wind is in the tree,  
 But they are silent;—still they roll along  
 Immeasurably distant; and the vault,

Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,  
Still deepens its unfathomable depth.  
At length the Vision closes; and the mind,  
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,  
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,  
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

1798. 1815.

### WE ARE SEVEN

—A SIMPLE Child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:  
She was eight years old, she said;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad:  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;  
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be?"  
"How many? Seven in all," she said  
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."  
She answered, "Seven are we;  
And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother;  
And in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,  
"Seven boys and girls are we;  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,  
Your limbs they are alive;  
If two are in the church-yard laid,  
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be  
seen."  
The little Maid replied,

"Twelve steps or more from my mother's  
door,  
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem;  
And there upon the ground I sit,  
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;  
In bed she moaning lay,  
Till God released her of her pain;  
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;  
And, when the grass was dry,  
Together round her grave we played,  
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with  
snow,  
And I could run and slide,  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,  
"If they two are in heaven?"  
Quick was the little Maid's reply,  
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are  
dead!  
Their spirits are in heaven!"  
'Twas throwing words away; for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

1798. 1798.

### SIMON LEE

#### THE OLD HUNTSMAN;

#### WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED.

This old man had been huntsman to the squire of Alfoxden. . . . The fact was as mentioned in the poem; and I have, after an interval of forty-five years, the image of the old man as fresh before my eyes as if I had seen him yesterday. The expression when the hounds were out, "I dearly love their voice," was word for word from his own lips. (*Wordsworth.*)

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,  
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,

An old Man dwells, a little man,—  
Tis said he once was tall.  
Full five and thirty years he lived  
A running huntsman merry;  
And still the centre of his cheek  
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,  
And hill and valley rang with glee  
When Echo banded, round and round,  
The halloo of Simon Lee.  
In those proud days, he little cared  
For husbandry or tillage;  
To blither tasks did Simon rouse  
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
Could leave both man and horse behind:  
And often, ere the chase was done,  
He reeled and was stone-blind.  
And still there's something in the world  
At which his heart rejoices;  
For when the chiming hounds are out,  
He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change!—bereft  
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,  
see!

Old Simon to the world is left  
In liveried poverty.  
His Master's dead,—and no one now  
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor;  
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;  
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick:  
His body, dwindled and awry,  
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;  
His legs are thin and dry.  
One prop he has, and only one,  
His wife, an aged woman,  
Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
Not twenty paces from the door.  
A scrap of land they have, but they  
Are poorest of the poor.  
This scrap of land he from the heath  
Enclosed when he was stronger;  
But what to them avails the land  
Which he can till no longer?

Of, working by her Husband's side,  
Ruth does what Simon cannot do;  
For she, with scanty cause for pride,  
Is stouter of the two.  
And, though you with your utmost skill  
From labor could not wean them,

Tis little, very little—all  
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store  
As he to you will tell,  
For still, the more he works, the more  
Do his weak ankles swell.  
My gentle Reader, I perceive  
How patiently you've waited,  
And now I fear that you expect  
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind  
Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
O gentle Reader! you would find  
A tale in every thing.  
What more I have to say is short,  
And you must kindly take it:  
It is no tale; but, should you think,  
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see  
This old Man doing all he could  
To unearth the root of an old tree,  
A stump of rotten wood.  
The mattock tottered in his hand;  
So vain was his endeavor,  
That at the root of the old tree  
He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtaken, good Simon Lee,  
Give me your tool," to him I said;  
And at the word right gladly he  
Received my proffered aid.  
I struck, and with a single blow  
The tangled root I severed,  
At which the poor old Man so long  
And vainly had endeavored.

The tears into his eyes were brought.  
And thanks and praises seemed to run  
So fast out of his heart, I thought  
They never would have done.  
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
With coldness still returning;  
Alas! the gratitude of men  
Hath oftener left me mourning.

1798. 1798.

#### LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined.  
In that sweet mood when pleasant  
thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran ;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green  
bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure :—  
But the least motion which they made  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air ;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man ?  
1798. 1798.

#### TO MY SISTER

It is the first mild day of March :  
Each minute sweeter than before  
The redbreast sings from the tall larch  
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,  
Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,  
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)  
Now that our morning meal is done,  
Make haste, your morning task resign ;  
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,  
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;  
And bring no book : for this one day  
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate  
Our living calendar :  
We from to-day, my Friend, will date  
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,  
From heart to heart is stealing,  
From earth to man, from man to earth :  
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more  
Than years of toiling reason :  
Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,  
Which they shall long obey :  
We for the year to come may take  
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls  
About, below, above,  
We'll frame the measure of our souls :  
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,  
With speed put on your woodland dress ;  
And bring no book : for this one day  
We'll give to idleness. 1798. 1798.

#### A WHIRL-BLAST FROM BEHIND THE HILL

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill  
Rushed o'er the wood with startling  
sound ;  
Then—all at once the air was still,  
And showers of hailstones pattered  
round.

Where leafless oaks towered high above,  
I sat within an undergrove  
Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;  
A fairer bower was never seen.  
From year to year the spacious floor  
With withered leaves is covered o'er,  
And all the year the bower is green.  
But see ! where'er the hailstones drop  
The withered leaves all skip and hop :  
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—  
Yet here, and there, and everywhere  
Along the floor, beneath the shade  
By those embowering hollies made,  
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
As if with pipes and music rare  
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,  
And all those leaves, in festive glee,  
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.  
1798. 1800.

#### EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

“ WHY, William, on that old gray stone  
Thus for the length of half a day,  
Why, William, sit you thus alone,  
And dream your time away ?

"Where are your books?—that light be-  
queathed  
To Beings else forlorn and blind!  
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed  
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,  
As if she for no purpose bore you;  
As if you were her first-born birth,  
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,  
When life was sweet, I knew not why,  
To me my good friend Matthew spake,  
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;  
We cannot bid the ear be still;  
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,  
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
Which of themselves our minds impress;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,  
Conversing as I may,  
I sit upon this old gray stone,  
And dream my time away."

1798. 1798.

### THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME  
SUBJECT

UP! up! my Friend, and quit your books;  
Or surely you'll grow double:  
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your  
looks;  
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,  
A freshening lustre mellow  
Through all the long green fields has  
spread,  
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:  
Come, hear the woodland linnet,  
How sweet his music! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher:  
Come forth into the light of things,  
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless—  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of  
things:  
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;  
Close up those barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives. 1798. 1798.

### LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE  
WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13, 1798.

No poem of mine was composed under circum-  
stances more pleasant for me to remember than  
this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after  
crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was  
entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble  
of four or five days, with my sister. Not a line  
of it was altered, and not any part of it written  
down till I reached Bristol. It was published  
almost immediately after in the little volume of  
which so much has been said in these Notes.  
(*Wordsworth*. The volume referred to is *The  
Lyrical Ballads*, as first published at Bristol by  
Cottle.)

FIVE years have past; five summers,  
with the length  
Of five long winters! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their moun-  
tain-springs  
With a soft inland murmur.<sup>1</sup>—Once  
again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and  
connect  
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
The day is come when I again repose

<sup>1</sup> The river is not affected by the tides a few  
miles above Tintern. — (*Wordsworth*, 1798.)

Here, under this dark sycamore, and  
view  
These plots of cottage-ground, these  
orchard-tufts,  
Which at this season, with their unripe  
fruits,  
Are clad in one green hue, and lose  
themselves  
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I  
see  
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows,  
little lines  
Of sportive wood run wild: these pas-  
toral farms,  
Green to the very door; and wreaths of  
smoke  
Sent up, in silence, from among the  
trees!  
With some uncertain notice, as might  
seem  
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless  
woods,  
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his  
fire  
The Hermit sits alone.  
These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been  
to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the  
din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the  
heart;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure: such, per-  
haps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I  
trust,  
To them I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed  
mood,  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary  
weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed  
mood,  
In which the affections gently lead us  
on,—  
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human  
blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep

In body, and become a living soul:  
While with an eye made quiet by the  
power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

If this  
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—  
In darkness and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful  
stir

Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my  
heart—

How oft, in spirit, have I turned to  
thee,

O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the  
woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!  
And now, with gleams of half-extin-  
guished thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,

The picture of the mind revives again:  
While here I stand, not only with the  
sense

Of present pleasure, but with pleasing  
thoughts

That in this moment there is life and  
food

For future years. And so I dare to  
hope,

Though changed, no doubt, from what I  
was when first

I came among these hills; when like a  
roe

I bounded o'er the mountains, by the  
sides

Of the deep rivers, and the lonely  
streams,

Wherever nature led: more like a man  
Flying from something that he dreads,

than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For  
nature then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish  
days,

And their glad animal movements all  
gone by)

To me was all in all.—I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cata-  
ract

Haunted me like a passion: the tall  
rock,

The mountain, and the deep and gloomy  
wood,

Their colors and their forms, were then  
to me

An appetite: a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,

By thought supplied, nor any interest  
 Unborrowed from the eye.—That time  
     is past,  
 And all its aching joys are now no more,  
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other  
     gifts  
 Have followed; for such loss, I would  
     believe,  
 Abundant recompense. For I have  
     learned  
 To look on nature, not as in the hour  
 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-  
     times  
 The still, sad music of humanity.  
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample  
     power  
 To chasten and subdue. And I have  
     felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the  
     joy  
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply inter-  
     fused,  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting  
     suns,  
 And the round ocean and the living air,  
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of  
     man;  
 A motion and a spirit, that impels  
 All thinking things, all objects of all  
     thought,  
 And rolls through all things. Therefore  
     am I still  
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
 And mountains; and of all that we be-  
     hold  
 From this green earth; of all the mighty  
     world  
 Of eye, and ear,—both what they half  
     create,  
 And what perceive; well pleased to  
     recognize  
 In nature and the language of the sense,  
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the  
     nurse,  
 The guide, the guardian of my heart,  
     and soul  
 Of all my moral being.  
                                     Nor perchance,  
 If I were not thus taught, should I the  
     more  
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay:  
 For thou art with me here upon the  
     banks  
 Of this fair river; thou my dearest  
     Friend,  
 My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice  
     I catch

The language of my former heart, and  
     read  
 My former pleasures in the shooting  
     lights  
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little  
     while  
 May I behold in thee what I was once,  
 My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I  
     make,  
 Knowing that Nature never did betray  
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privi-  
     lege,  
 Through all the years of this our life, to  
     lead  
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
 The mind that is within us, so impress  
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil  
     tongues,  
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish  
     men,  
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor  
     all  
 The dreary intercourse of daily life.  
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we  
     behold  
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the  
     moon  
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;  
 And let the misty mountain-winds be  
     free  
 To blow against thee: and, in after years,  
 When these wild ecstasies shall be  
     matured  
 Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind  
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies;  
     oh! then,  
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
 Should be thy portion, with what heal-  
     ing thoughts  
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
 And these my exhortations! Nor, per-  
     chance—  
 If I should be where I no more can hear  
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes  
     these gleams  
 Of past existence—wilt thou then forget  
 That on the banks of this delightful  
     stream  
 We stood together; and that I, so long  
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came  
 Unwearied in that service: rather say  
 With warmer love—oh! with far deeper  
     zeal  
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then for-  
     get,



That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty  
cliffs,  
And this green pastoral landscape, were  
to me  
More dear, both for themselves and for  
thy sake! 1798. 1798.

### THE SIMPLON PASS

———BROOK and road  
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy  
Pass,  
And with them did we journey several  
hours  
At a slow step. The immeasurable  
height  
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,  
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,  
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and  
forlorn,  
The torrents shooting from the clear  
blue sky,  
The rocks that muttered close upon our  
ears,  
Black drizzling crags that spake by the  
wayside  
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,  
The unfettered clouds and region of the  
heavens,  
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
light—  
Were all like workings of one mind, the  
features  
Of the same face, blossoms upon one  
tree,  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and with-  
out end. 1799. 1845.

### INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

#### IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe!  
Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of  
thought!  
And giv'st to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion! not in vain.  
By day or star-light, thus from my first  
dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for  
me  
The passions that build up our human  
soul;  
Not with the mean and vulgar works of  
Man,  
But with high objects, with enduring  
things.  
With life and nature; purifying thus  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying by such discipline  
Both pain and fear,—until we recognize  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.  
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to  
me  
With stinted kindness. In November  
days,  
When vapors rolling down the valleys  
made  
A lonely scene more lonesome; among  
woods  
At noon; and 'mid the calm of summer  
nights,  
When by the margin of the trembling  
lake,  
Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I  
went  
In solitude, such intercourse was mine:  
Mine was it in the fields both day and  
night,  
And by the waters, all the summer long.  
And in the frosty season, when the sun  
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,  
The cottage-windows through the twi-  
light blazed.  
I heeded not the summons: happy time  
It was indeed for all of us; for me  
It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud  
The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled  
about,  
Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
That cares not for his home.—All shod  
with steel  
We hissed along the polished ice, in  
games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasures,—the resound-  
ing horn,  
The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted  
hare.  
So through the darkness and the cold  
we flew,  
And not a voice was idle: with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud:  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the  
stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in  
the west  
The orange sky of evening died away.  
Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumult-  
uous throng,  
To cut across the reflex of a star ;  
Image, that, flying still before me,  
gleamed  
Upon the glassy plain : and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the  
wind,  
And all the shadowy banks on either  
side  
Came sweeping through the darkness,  
spinning still  
The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth  
had rolled  
With visible motion her diurnal round !  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn  
train,  
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and  
watched  
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.  
1799. 1800.

## THERE WAS A BOY

Written in Germany. This is an extract from  
the poem on my own poetical education. (*Words-  
worth's* The poem referred to is *The Prelude*.)

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye  
cliffs  
And islands of Winander !—many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering  
lake ;  
And there, with fingers interwoven, both  
hands  
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his  
mouth  
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
That they might answer him.—And they  
would shout  
Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
Responsive to his call,—with quivering  
peals.  
And long halloos, and screams, and  
echoes loud  
Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse  
wild

Of jocund din ! And, when there came  
a pause  
Of silence such as baffled his best skill,  
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while  
he hung  
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain-torrents ; or the visible  
scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven  
received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake.  
This boy was taken from his mates,  
and died  
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years  
old.  
Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale  
Where he was born and bred : the church-  
yard hangs  
Upon a slope above the village-school ;  
And through that church-yard when my  
way has led  
On summer-evenings, I believe, that  
there  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute—looking at the grave in which he  
lies !  
1798. 1800.

## NUTTING

Written in Germany ; intended as part of a  
poem on my own life, but struck out as not  
being wanted there. . . . (*Wordsworth*).

——— It seems a day  
(I speak of one from many singled out)  
One of those heavenly days that cannot  
die ;  
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying  
forth  
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders  
slung.  
A nutting-crook in hand ; and turned  
my steps  
Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure  
quaint,  
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off  
weeds  
Which for that service had been hus-  
banded,  
By exhortation of my frugal Dame—  
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles—  
and, in truth,  
More ragged than need was ! O'er  
pathless rocks,

Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,  
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign  
 Of devastation; but the hazels rose  
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,  
 A virgin scene!—A little while I stood,  
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
 As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint  
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
 The banquet;—or beneath the trees I sate  
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;  
 A temper known to those, who, after long  
 And weary expectation, have been blest  
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.  
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
 The violets of five seasons re-appear  
 And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
 For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam.  
 And—with my cheek on one of those green stones  
 That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,  
 Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—  
 I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay  
 Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,  
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,  
 Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones  
 And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
 And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
 And merciless ravage: and the shady nook  
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
 Their quiet being: and, unless I now  
 Confound my present feelings with the past;  
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned  
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld

The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—  
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades  
 In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.  
 1799. 1800.

#### STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN

The next three poems were written in Germany. (*Wordsworth.*)

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:  
 And I will dare to tell,  
 But in the Lover's ear alone,  
 What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day  
 Fresh as a rose in June,  
 I to her cottage bent my way,  
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
 All over the wide lea;  
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
 Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;  
 And, as we climbed the hill,  
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot  
 Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon!  
 And all the while my eyes I kept  
 On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof  
 He raised, and never stopped:  
 When down behind the cottage roof,  
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide  
 Into a Lover's head!  
 "O mercy!" to myself I cried,  
 "If Lucy should be dead!"

1799. 1800.

#### SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
 Beside the springs of Dove,  
 A Maid whom there were none to praise  
 And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye !  
—Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be ;  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me ! 1799. 1800.

#### I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,  
In lands beyond the sea ;  
Nor, England ! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time ; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

Among the mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire ;  
And she I cherished turned her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed  
The bowers where Lucy played ;  
And thine too is the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.  
1799. 1807.

#### THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, " A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown ;  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

" Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and  
bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

" She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn,  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

" The floating clouds their state shall  
lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ;  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's  
form  
By silent sympathy.

" The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward  
round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

" And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell ;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake.—The work was  
done—  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be. 1799. 1800.

#### A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;  
I had no human fears :  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;  
She neither hears nor sees ;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.  
1799. 1800.

#### A POET'S EPITAPH

ART thou a Statist in the van  
Of public conflicts trained and bred ?  
—First learn to love one living man ;  
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh !  
Go, carry to some fitter place  
The keenness of that practised eye,  
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?  
A rosy Man, right plump to see?  
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,  
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,  
A Soldier and no man of chaff?  
Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,  
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one all eyes,  
Philosopher! a fingering slave,  
One that would peep and botanize  
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,  
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,  
That he below may rest in peace,  
Thy ever-dwindling soul away!

A Moralist perchance appears;  
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor  
sod:  
And he has neither eyes nor ears;  
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can  
cling  
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small!  
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,  
An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the  
latch;  
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;  
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch  
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is he, with modest looks,  
And clad in homely russet brown?  
He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,  
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;  
And you must love him, ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie  
Some random truths he can impart,—  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,  
Hath been an idler in the land;  
Contented if he might enjoy  
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength;  
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!  
Here stretch thy body at full length;  
Or build thy house upon this grave.

1799. 1800.

### MATTHEW

In the School of—— is a tablet, on which are inscribed in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the Author wrote the following lines.

Such a Tablet as is here spoken of continued to be preserved in Hawkshead School, though the inscriptions were not brought down to our time. This and other poems connected with Matthew would not gain by a literal detail of facts. Like the Wanderer in "The Excursion," this Schoolmaster was made up of several both of his class and men of other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet's calling. (*Wordsworth.*)

If Nature, for a favorite child,  
In thee hath tempered so her clay,  
That every hour thy heart runs wild,  
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review  
This tablet, that thus humbly rears  
In such diversity of hue  
Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of  
fame,  
Cipher and syllable! thine eye  
Has travelled down to Matthew's name.  
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,  
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:  
For Matthew a request I make  
Which for himself he hath not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,  
Is silent as a standing pool;  
Far from the chimney's merry roar,  
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were  
sighs  
Of one tired out with fun and madness;

The tears which came to Matthew's  
eyes  
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup  
Of still and serious thought went round,  
It seemed as if he drank it up—  
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!  
Thou happy Soul! and can it be  
That these two words of glittering gold  
Are all that must remain of thee?

1799. 1800.

### THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

WE walked along, while bright and red  
Uprose the morning sun;  
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and  
said,  
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,  
With hair of glittering gray;  
As blithe a man as you could see  
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,  
And by the steaming rills,  
We travelled merrily, to pass  
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,  
Then, from thy breast what thought,  
Beneath so beautiful a sun,  
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;  
And fixing still his eye  
Upon the eastern mountain-top,  
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft  
Brings fresh into my mind  
A day like this which I have left  
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn  
Such colors, and no other,  
Were in the sky, that April morn,  
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport  
Which that sweet season gave,  
And, to the church-yard come, stopped  
short  
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,  
The pride of all the vale;  
And then she sang;—she would have  
been

A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;  
And yet I loved her more,  
For so it seemed, than till that day  
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,  
Beside the church-yard yew,  
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet  
With points of morning dew,

"A basket on her head she bare;  
Her brow was smooth and white:  
To see a child so very fair,  
It was a pure delight!

"No fountain from its rocky cave  
E'er tripped with foot so free;  
She seemed as happy as a wave  
That dances on the sea;

"There came from me a sigh of pain  
Which I could ill confine;  
I looked at her, and looked again:  
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,  
Methinks, I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand. 1799. 1800.

### THE FOUNTAIN

#### A CONVERSATION

We talked with open heart, and tongue  
Affectionate and true.  
A pair of friends, though I was young,  
And Matthew seventy-two,

We lay beneath a spreading oak,  
Beside a mossy seat;  
And from the turf a fountain broke,  
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us  
match

This water's pleasant tune  
With some old border-song, or catch  
That suits a summer's noon;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes  
Sing here beneath the shade,

That half-mad thing of witty rhymes  
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed  
The spring beneath the tree;  
And thus the dear old Man replied,  
The gray-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet  
fears;  
How merrily it goes!  
'Twill murmur on a thousand years.  
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,  
I cannot choose but think  
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay  
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred,  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard,

"Thus fares it still in our decay:  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,  
The lark above the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please  
Are quiet when they will.

"With Nature never do they wage  
A foolish strife: they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free:

"But we are pressed by heavy laws;  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy, because  
We have been glad of yore.

"If there be one who need bemoan  
His kindred laid in earth,  
The household hearts that were his own:  
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone.  
My life has been approved,  
And many love me: but by none  
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,  
The man who thus complains;  
I live and sing my idle songs  
Upon these happy plains;

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead  
I'll be a son to thee!"  
At this he grasped my hand, and said,  
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side;  
And down the smooth descent  
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;  
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,  
He sang those witty rhymes  
About the crazy old church-clock,  
And the bewildered chimes.

1799. 1800.

### LUCY GRAY OR, SOLITUDE

Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualizing of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment. (Wordsworth.)

See also Henry Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, Sept. 11, 1816.

OF I had heard of Lucy Gray:  
And, when I crossed the wild,  
I chanced to see at break of day  
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;  
She dwelt on a wide moor,  
—The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
The hare upon the green;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—  
You to the town must go;  
And take a lantern. Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:  
'Tis scarcely afternoon—  
The minster-clock has just struck two,  
And yonder is the moon!"

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a fagot band;  
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :  
She wandered up and down ;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb :  
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide ;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on the hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor ;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward,  
cried,  
“ In heaven we all shall meet ; ”  
—When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's  
edge  
They tracked the footmarks small ;  
And through the broken hawthorn  
hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed:  
The marks were still the same ;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;  
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank ;  
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child ;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind ;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

1799. 1800.

## MICHAEL

### A PASTORAL POEM

Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as “ The Brothers.” The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north. (*Wordsworth.*)

If from the public way you turn your  
steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll,  
You will suppose that with an upright  
path  
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold  
ascent  
The pastoral mountains front you, face  
to face.  
But, courage ! for around that boister-  
ous brook  
The mountains have all opened out them-  
selves,  
And made a hidden valley of their own.  
No habitation can be seen ; but they  
Who journey thither find themselves  
alone  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,  
and kites  
That overhead are sailing in the sky.  
It is in truth an utter solitude ;  
Nor should I have made mention of this  
Dell  
But for one object which you might pass  
by.  
Might see and notice not. Beside the  
brook  
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn  
stones !  
And to that simple object appertains  
A story—unenriched with strange  
events,  
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,  
Or for the summer shade. It was the first  
Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys,  
men  
Whom I already loved ; not verily  
For their own sakes, but for the fields  
and hills  
Where was their occupation and abode.  
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a  
Boy  
Careless of books, yet having felt the  
power



Of Nature, by the gentle agency  
 Of natural objects, led me on to feel  
 For passions that were not my own, and  
     think  
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)  
 On man, the heart of man, and human  
     life.  
 Therefore, although it be a history  
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same  
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;  
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the  
     sake  
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills  
 Will be my second self when I am gone.  
 UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale  
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his  
     name ;  
 An old man, stout of heart, and strong  
     of limb.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth  
     to age  
 Of an unusual strength : his mind was  
     keen,  
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,  
 And in his shepherd's calling he was  
     prompt  
 And watchful more than ordinary men.  
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all  
     winds,  
 Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,  
 When others heeded not, He heard the  
     South  
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his  
     flock  
 Bethought him, and he to himself would  
     say,  
 " The winds are now devising work for  
     me ! "  
 And, truly, at all times, the storm that  
     drives  
 The traveller to shelter, summoned him  
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone  
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
 That came to him, and left him, on the  
     heights.  
 So lived he till his eightieth year was  
     past.  
 And grossly that man errs, who should  
     suppose  
 That the green valleys, and the streams  
     and rocks,  
 Were things indifferent to the Shep-  
     herd's thoughts.  
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had  
     breathed  
 The common air ; hills, which with vig-  
     orous step

He had so often climbed ; which had  
     impressed  
 So many incidents upon his mind  
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or  
     fear ;  
 Which, like a book, preserved the mem-  
     ory  
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had  
     saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such  
     acts  
 The certainty of honorable gain ;  
 Those fields, those hills—what could they  
     less ? had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections, were to  
     him  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.  
     His days had not been passed in sin-  
     gleness.  
 His Helpmate was a comely matron,  
     old—  
 Though younger than himself full twenty  
     years.  
 She was a woman of a stirring life,  
 Whose heart was in her house : two  
     wheels she had  
 Of antique form : this large, for spinning  
     wool ;  
 That small, for flax ; and if one wheel  
     had rest  
 It was because the other was at work.  
 The Pair had but one inmate in their  
     house,  
 An only Child, who had been born to  
     them  
 When Michael, telling o'er his years,  
     began  
 To deem that he was old,—in shep-  
     herd's phrase,  
 With one foot in the grave. This only  
     Son,  
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many  
     a storm,  
 The one of an inestimable worth,  
 Made all their household. I may truly  
     say,  
 That they were as a proverb in the vale  
 For endless industry. When day was  
     gone,  
 And from their occupations out of doors  
 The Son and Father were come home,  
     even then,  
 Their labor did not cease ; unless when  
     all  
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and  
     there,  
 Each with a mess of pottage and  
     skimmed milk,

Sat round the basket piled with oaten  
cakes,  
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet  
when the meal  
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was  
named)  
And his old Father both betook them-  
selves  
To such convenient work as might em-  
ploy  
Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to  
card  
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or  
repair  
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or  
scythe,  
Or other implement of house or field.  
Down from the ceiling, by the chim-  
ney's edge,  
That in our ancient uncouth country  
style  
With huge and black projection over-  
browed  
Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a  
lamp;  
An aged utensil, which had performed  
Service beyond all others of its kind.  
Early at evening did it burn—and late,  
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
Which, going by from year to year, had  
found,  
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps  
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with  
hopes,  
Living a life of eager industry.  
And now, when Luke had reached his  
eighteenth year,  
There by the light of this old lamp they  
sate,  
Father and Son, while far into the night  
The Housewife plied her own peculiar  
work,  
Making the cottage through the silent  
hours  
Murmur as with the sound of summer  
flies.  
This light was famous in its neighbor-  
hood,  
And was a public symbol of the life  
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it  
chanced,  
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
Stood single, with large prospect, north  
and south,  
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-  
Raise,  
And westward to the village near the  
lake;

And from this constant light, so regular  
And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
Both old and young, was named THE  
EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length  
of years,  
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must  
needs  
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Mi-  
chael's heart  
This son of his old age was yet more  
dear—  
Less from instinctive tenderness, the  
same  
Fond spirit that blindly works in the  
blood of all—  
Than that a child, more than all other  
gifts  
That earth can offer to declining man,  
Brings hope with it, and forward-look-  
ing thoughts,  
And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
By tendency of nature needs must fail.  
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
His heart and his heart's joy! For  
oftentimes  
Old Michael, while he was a babe in  
arms,  
Had done him female service, not alone  
For pastime and delight, as is the use  
Of fathers, but with patient mind en-  
forced  
To acts of tenderness; and he had  
rocked  
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle  
hand.  
And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael  
love,  
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
To have the Young-one in his sight,  
when he  
Wrought in the field, or on his shep-  
herd's stool  
Sate with a fettered sheep before him  
stretched  
Under the large old oak, that near his  
door  
Stood single, and, from matchless depth  
of shade,  
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the  
sun,  
Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
The CLIPPING TREE,<sup>1</sup> a name which yet  
it bears.

<sup>1</sup> Clipping is the word used in the North of  
England for shearing. (*Wordsworth*.)

There, while they two were sitting in  
the shade,  
With others round them, earnest all and  
blithe,  
Would Michael exercise his heart with  
looks  
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the  
sheep  
By catching at their legs, or with his  
shouts  
Scared them, while they lay still be-  
neath the shears.  
And when by Heaven's good grace the  
boy grew up  
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
Two steady roses that were five years  
old ;  
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut  
With his own hand a sapling, which he  
hooped  
With iron, making it throughout in all  
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith  
equipt  
He as a watchman oftentimes was  
placed  
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the  
flock ;  
And, to his office prematurely called,  
There stood the urchin, as you will di-  
vine,  
Something between a hindrance and a  
help ;  
And for this cause not always, I believe,  
Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;  
Though nought was left undone which  
staff, or voice,  
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could  
perform.  
But soon as Luke, full ten years old,  
could stand  
Against the mountain blasts ; and to the  
heights,  
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary  
ways,  
He with his Father daily went, and they  
Were as companions, why should I relate  
That objects which the Shepherd loved  
before  
Were dearer now ? that from the Boy  
there came  
Feelings and emanations—things which  
were  
Light to the sun and music to the wind ;  
And that the old Man's heart seemed born  
again ?  
Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew  
up :

And now, when he had reached his eigh-  
teenth year,  
He was his comfort and his daily hope.  
While in this sort the simple house-  
hold lived  
From day to day, to Michael's ear there  
came  
Distressful tidings. Long before the  
time  
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been  
bound  
In surety for his brother's son, a man  
Of an industrious life, and ample means ;  
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
Had prest upon him ; and old Michael  
now  
Was summoned to discharge the forfeit-  
ure,  
A grievous penalty, but little less  
Than half his substance. This unlooked-  
for claim,  
At the first hearing, for a moment took  
More hope out of his life than he sup-  
posed  
That any old man ever could have  
lost.  
As soon as he had armed himself with  
strength  
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed  
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at  
once  
A portion of his patrimonial fields.  
Such was his first resolve ; he thought  
again,  
And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said  
he,  
Two evenings after he had heard the  
news,  
" I have been toiling more than seventy  
years,  
And in the open sunshine of God's love  
Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of  
ours  
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I  
think  
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.  
Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself  
Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;  
And I have lived to be a fool at last  
To my own family. An evil man  
That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
Were false to us ; and if he were not  
false,  
There are ten thousand to whom loss like  
this  
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—  
but  
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk  
thus.

"When I began, my purpose was to speak

Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.  
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land  
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;  
He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
That passes over it. We have, thou  
know'st,

Another kinsman—he will be our friend  
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him  
shall go,

And with his kinsman's help and his own  
thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
He may return to us. If here he stay,  
What can be done? Where every one is  
poor,

What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,  
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
Was busy, looking back into past times.  
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to  
herself,

He was a parish-boy—at the church-door  
They made a gathering for him, shil-  
lings, pence

And halfpennies, wherewith the neigh-  
bors bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's  
wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
Went up to London, found a master  
there,

Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
To go and overlook his merchandise  
Beyond the seas; where he grew won-  
drous rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor  
And, at his birthplace, built a chapel,  
floored

With marble which he sent from foreign  
lands.

These thoughts, and many others of like  
sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of  
Isabel,

And her face brightened. The old Man  
was glad.

And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel!  
this scheme

These two days, has been meat and  
drink to me.

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.  
—We have enough—I wish indeed that I  
Were younger;—but this hope is a good  
hope.

—Make ready Luke's best garments, of  
the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him  
forth

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:  
—If he *could* go, the boy should go to-  
night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields  
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for  
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day  
long

Wrought on with her best fingers to pre-  
pare

Things needful for the journey of her  
son.

But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
To stop her in her work: for, when she lay  
By Michael's side, she through the last  
two nights

Heard him, how he was troubled in his  
sleep:

And when they rose at morning she  
could see

That all his hopes were gone. That day  
at noon

She said to Luke, while they two by  
themselves

Were sitting at the door, "Thou must  
not go:

We have no other child but thee to lose,  
None to remember—do not go away,  
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."  
The Youth made answer with a jocund  
voice;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
Recovered heart. That evening her  
best fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
Like happy people round a Christmas  
fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her  
work;

And all the ensuing week the house  
appeared

As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at  
length

The expected letter from their kinsman  
came,

With kind assurances that he would do  
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;  
To which, requests were added, that  
forthwith

He might be sent to him. Ten times or  
more

The letter was read over; Isabel  
Went forth to show it to the neighbors  
round;

Nor was there at that time on English  
land

A prouder heart than Luke's. When  
Isabel  
Had to her house returned, the old Man  
said,  
"He shall depart to-morrow." To this  
word  
The Housewife answered, talking much  
of things  
Which, if at such short notice he should  
go,  
Would surely be forgotten. But at  
length  
She gave consent, and Michael was at  
ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-  
head Ghyll,  
In that deep valley, Michael had de-  
signed  
To build a Sheepfold; and, before he  
heard  
The tidings of his melancholy loss,  
For this same purpose he had gathered  
up

A heap of stones, which by the stream-  
let's edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.  
With Luke that evening thitherward he  
walked:

And soon as they had reached the place  
he stopped,

And thus the old Man spake to him:—  
"My Son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with  
full heart

I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.  
I will relate to thee some little part  
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good  
When thou art from me, even if I should  
touch

On things thou canst not know of.—  
After thou

First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls  
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep  
away

Two days, and blessings from thy  
Father's tongue

Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed  
on,

And still I loved thee with increasing  
love.

Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
Than when I heard thee by our own fire-  
side

First uttering, without words, a natural  
tune;

While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy  
joy

Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-  
lowed month,

And in the open fields my life was passed  
And on the mountains; else I think that  
thou

Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's  
knees.

But we were playmates, Luke: among  
these hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and  
young

Have played together, nor with me didst  
thou

Lack any pleasure which a boy can  
know."

Luke had a manly heart; but at these  
words

He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped  
his hand,

And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see  
That these are things of which I need  
not speak.

—Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
A kind and a good Father: and herein  
I but repay a gift which I myself  
Received at others' hands; for, though  
now old

Beyond the common life of man, I still  
Remember them who loved me in my  
youth.

Both of them sleep together: here they  
lived,

As all their Forefathers had done; and  
when

At length their time was come, they  
were not loth

To give their bodies to the family mould.  
I wished that thou should'st live the life  
they lived:

But, 'tis a long time to look back, my  
Son,

And see so little gain from threescore  
years.

These fields were burthened when they  
came to me;

Till I was forty years of age, not more  
Than half of my inheritance was mine.  
I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in  
my work,

And till these three weeks past the land  
was free.

—It looks as if it never could endure  
Another Master. Heaven forgive me,  
Luke,

If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused;  
Then, pointing to the stones near which  
they stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :  
 " This was a work for us ; and now, my  
 Son,  
 It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—  
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine  
 own hands.  
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both  
 may live  
 To see a better day. At eighty-four  
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy  
 part ;  
 I will do mine.—I will begin again  
 With many tasks that were resigned to  
 thee :  
 Up to the heights, and in among the  
 storms,  
 Will I without thee go again, and do  
 All works which I was wont to do alone,  
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless  
 thee, Boy !  
 Thy heart these two weeks has been  
 beating fast  
 With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—  
 yes—  
 I knew that thou could'st never have a  
 wish  
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been  
 bound to me  
 Only by links of love : when thou art  
 gone,  
 What will be left to us !—But, I forget  
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone.  
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,  
 When thou art gone away, should evil  
 men  
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,  
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy  
 thoughts,  
 And God will strengthen thee : amid all  
 fear  
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that  
 thou  
 May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers  
 lived,  
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare  
 thee well—  
 When thou return'st, thou in this place  
 wilt see  
 A work which is not here : a covenant  
 'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate  
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
 And bear thy memory with me to the  
 grave."  
 The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke  
 stooped down,  
 And, as his Father had requested, laid  
 The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the  
 sight

The old Man's grief broke from him ; to  
 his heart  
 He pressed his Son, he kissed him and  
 wept ;  
 And to the house together they returned.  
 —Hushed was that House in peace, or  
 seeming peace,  
 Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn  
 the Boy  
 Began his journey, and when he had  
 reached  
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;  
 And all the neighbors, as he passed their  
 doors,  
 Came forth with wishes and with fare-  
 well prayers,  
 That followed him till he was out of  
 sight.  
 A good report did from their Kinsman  
 come,  
 Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy  
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous  
 news,  
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it,  
 were throughout  
 " The prettiest letters that were ever  
 seen."  
 Both parents read them with rejoicing  
 hearts.  
 So, many months passed on : and once  
 again  
 The Shepherd went about his daily work  
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ;  
 and now  
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure  
 hour  
 He to that valley took his way, and there  
 Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime  
 Luke began  
 To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,  
 He in the dissolute city gave himself  
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame  
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.  
 There is a comfort in the strength of  
 love ;  
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which  
 else  
 Would overset the brain, or break the  
 heart :  
 I have conversed with more than one  
 who well  
 Remember the old Man, and what he was  
 Years after he had heard this heavy  
 news.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth  
 to age  
 Of an unusual strength. Among the  
 rocks

He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,  
And listened to the wind; and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep.

And for the land, his small inheritance.  
And to that hollow dell from time to time  
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet  
The pity which was then in every heart  
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all  
That many and many a day he thither went,

And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes  
was he seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog.  
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.  
The length of full seven years, from  
time to time,

He at the building of this Sheepfold  
wrought,  
And left the work unfinished when he  
died.

Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
Survive her Husband: at her death the  
estate

Was sold, and went into a stranger's  
hand.

The Cottage which was named the EVEN-  
ING STAR

Is gone—the ploughshare has been  
through the ground

On which it stood: great changes have  
been wrought

In all the neighborhood:—yet the oak is  
left

That grew beside their door; and the  
remains

Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-  
head Ghyll. 1800. 1800.

#### THE SPARROWS' NEST

Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.  
At the end of the garden of my father's house  
at Cocker-mouth was a high terrace that com-  
manded a fine view of the river Derwent and  
Cocker-mouth Castle. This was our favorite  
play-ground. The terrace-wall, a low one, was  
covered with closely-clipt privet and roses,  
which gave an almost impervious shelter to  
birds that built their nests there. The latter of  
these stanzas alludes to one of those nests.  
(Wordsworth.)

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,  
Those bright blue eggs together laid!  
On me the chance-discovered sight  
Gleamed like a vision of delight.  
I started—seeming to espy  
The home and sheltered bed,

The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by  
My Father's house, in wet or dry  
My sister Emmeline<sup>1</sup> and I

Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;  
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:  
Such heart was in her, being then  
A little Prattler among men.

The Blessing of my later years

Was with me when a boy:

She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;

And humble cares, and delicate fears;

A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;

And love, and thought, and joy.

1801. 1807.

#### MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky:

So was it when my life began;

So is it now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.

1802. 1807.

#### WRITTEN IN MARCH

##### WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER

Extempore. This little poem was a favorite  
with Joanna Baillie. (Wordsworth)

Compare the description of the same scene by  
Wordsworth's sister: "There was the gentle  
flowing of the stream, the glittering, lively lake,  
green fields without a living creature to be seen  
on them; behind us, a flat pasture with forty-  
two cattle feeding; to our left, the road leading  
to the hamlet. No smoke there, the sun shone  
on the bare roofs. The people were at work  
ploughing, harrowing, and sowing; . . . a dog  
barking now and then, cocks crowing, birds  
twittering, the snow in patches at the top of the  
highest hills, yellow palms, purple and green  
twigs on the birches, ashes with their glittering  
spikes, stems quite bare. The hawthorn a  
bright green, with black stems under the oak.  
The moss of the oak glossy. We went on . . .  
William finished his poem before we got to the  
foot of Kirkstone." (Dorothy Wordsworth's Jour-  
nal, April 16, 1802.)

THE Cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,

<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Wordsworth, called Emmeline also  
in the poem *To a Butterfly*. See the beautiful  
lines *To my Sister*, p. 8, the last lines of the  
Sonnet p. 31, and notes on the Sonnets of 1802.

The green field sleeps in the sun ;  
 The oldest and youngest  
 Are at work with the strongest ;  
 The cattle are grazing,  
 Their heads never raising ;  
 There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated  
 The snow hath retreated,  
 And now doth fare ill  
 On the top of the bare hill ;  
 The ploughboy is whooping—anon—  
 anon :  
 There's joy in the mountains ;  
 There's life in the fountains ;  
 Small clouds are sailing,  
 Blue sky prevailing ;  
 The rain is over and gone !

1802. 1807.

#### TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air. (*Wordsworth.*)

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,  
 Let them live upon their praises ;  
 Long as there's a sun that sets,  
 Primroses will have their glory ;  
 Long as there are violets,  
 They will have a place in story :  
 There's a flower that shall be mine,  
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far  
 For the finding of a star ;  
 Up and down the heavens they go,  
 Men that keep a mighty rout !  
 I'm as great as they, I trow,  
 Since the day I found thee out,  
 Little Flower !—I'll make a stir,  
 Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf  
 Bold, and lavish of thyself ;  
 Since we needs must first have met  
 I have seen thee, high and low,  
 Thirty years or more, and yet  
 'Twas a face I did not know ;  
 Thou hast now, go where I may,  
 Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,  
 In the time before the thrush

Has a thought about her nest,  
 Thou wilt come with half a call,  
 Spreading out thy glossy breast  
 Like a careless Prodigal ;  
 Telling tales about the sun,  
 When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !  
 Travel with the multitude :  
 Never heed them ; I aver  
 That they all are wanton wooers ;  
 But the thrifty cottager,  
 Who stirs little out of doors,  
 Joys to spy thee near her home ;  
 Spring is coming, Thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,  
 Kindly, unassuming Spirit !  
 Careless of thy neighborhood,  
 Thou dost show thy pleasant face  
 On the moor, and in the wood,  
 In the lane : there's not a place,  
 Howsoever mean it be,  
 But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,  
 Children of the flaring hours !  
 Buttercups, that will be seen,  
 Whether we will see or no ;  
 Others, too, of lofty mien :  
 They have done as worldlings do,  
 Taken praise that should be thine,  
 Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,  
 Ill-requited upon earth ;  
 Herald of a mighty band,  
 Of a joyous train ensuing,  
 Serving at my heart's command,  
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,  
 I will sing, as doth behove,  
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

1802. 1807.

#### TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet  
 When they lie about our feet :  
 February last, my heart  
 First at sight of thee was glad ;  
 All unheard of as thou art,  
 Thou must needs, I think, have had,  
 Celandine ! and long ago,  
 Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,  
 Whosoe'er the man might be,  
 Who the first with pointed rays  
 (Workman worthy to be sainted)



Set the sign-board in a blaze,  
When the rising sun he painted,  
Took the fancy from a glance  
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring  
News of winter's vanishing,  
And the children build their bowers,  
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould  
All about with full-blown flowers,  
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!  
With the proudest thou art there,  
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure  
By myself a lonely pleasure,  
Sighed to think I read a book  
Only read, perhaps, by me;  
Yet I long could overlook  
Thy bright coronet and Thee,  
And thy arch and wily ways,  
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;  
While the patient primrose sits  
Like a beggar in the cold,  
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,  
Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold;  
Liveliest of the vernal train  
When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,  
By what charm of sight or smell,  
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,  
Laboring for her waxen cells,  
Fondly settle upon Thee  
Prized above all buds and bells  
Opening daily at thy side,  
By the season multiplied?

Thou art not beyond the moon,  
But a thing "beneath our shoon:"  
Let the bold Discoverer thrud  
In his bark the polar sea;  
Rear who will a pyramid;  
Praise it is enough for me,  
If there be but three or four  
Who will love my little Flower.

1802. 1807.

#### RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

This poem was originally known as *The Leech Gatherer*, and is still often called by that title. Compare the account of its origin, in Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*:  
"When William and I returned, we met an old man almost double. He had on a coat, thrown over his shoulders, above his waistcoat and coat.

Under this he carried a bundle, and had an apron on and a night-cap. His face was interesting. He had dark eyes and a long nose. John, who afterwards met him at Wytheburn, took him for a Jew. He was of Scotch parents, but had been born in the army. He had had a wife, and 'she was a good woman, and it pleased God to bless us with ten children.' All these were dead but one, of whom he had not heard for many years, a sailor. His trade was to gather leeches, but now leeches were scarce, and he had not strength for it. He lived by begging, and was making his way to Carlisle, where he should buy a few godly books to sell. He said leeches were very scarce, partly owing to this dry season, but many years they have been scarce. He supposed it owing to their being much sought after, that they did not breed fast, and were of slow growth. Leeches were formerly 2s. 6d. per 100; they are now 80s. He had been hurt in driving a cart, his leg broken, his body driven over, his skull fractured. He felt no pain till he recovered from his first insensibility. . . . It was then late in the evening, when the light was just going away." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, October 8, 1800.)

THERE was a roaring in the wind all  
night;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;  
But now the sun is rising calm and  
bright;  
The birds are singing in the distant  
woods;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove  
broods;  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie  
chatters;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant  
noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of  
doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth:  
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on  
the moors  
The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the plashy  
earth  
Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she  
doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,  
I saw the hare that raced about with  
joy;  
I heard the woods and distant waters  
roar;  
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:  
The pleasant season did my heart em-  
ploy:  
My old remembrances went from me  
wholly;  
And all the ways of men, so vain and  
melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the  
might  
Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low ;  
To me that morning did it happen so ;  
And fears and fancies thick upon me  
came ;  
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I  
knew not, nor could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky ;  
And I bethought me of the playful hare :  
Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;  
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;  
Far from the world I walk, and from all  
care ;  
But there may come another day to me—  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and  
poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant  
thought,  
As if life's business were a summer  
mood ;  
As if all needful things would come un-  
sought  
To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;  
But how can he expect that others  
should  
Build for him, sow for him, and at his  
call  
Love him, who for himself will take no  
heed at all ?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous  
Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his  
pride ;  
Of him who walked in glory and in joy  
Following his plough, along the moun-  
tain-side :  
By our own spirits are we deified :  
We Poets in our youth begin in glad-  
ness ;  
But thereof come in the end desponden-  
cy and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,  
A leading from above, a something  
given,  
Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,  
When I with these untoward thoughts  
had striven,  
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven  
I saw a Man before me unawares :  
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore  
gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;  
Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
By what means it could thither come,  
and whence ;  
So that it seems a thing endued with  
sense :  
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a  
shelf  
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun  
itself ;

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor  
dead,  
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age :  
His body was bent double, feet and head  
Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;  
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage  
Of sickness felt by him in times long  
past,  
A more than human weight upon his  
frame had cast.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and  
pale face,  
Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood :  
And, still as I drew near with gentle  
pace,  
Upon the margin of that moorish flood  
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
That heareth not the loud winds when  
they call  
And moveth all together, if it move at  
all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the  
pond  
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look  
Upon the muddy water, which he  
conned,  
As if he had been reading in a book :  
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say.  
" This morning gives us promise of a  
glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he  
slowly drew :  
And him with further words I thus be-  
spoke,  
" What occupation do you there pursue ?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you."  
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-  
vivid eyes,

His words came feebly, from a feeble  
chest,  
But each in solemn order followed each,

With something of a lofty utterance  
 drest—  
 Choice word and measured phrase,  
 above the reach  
 Of ordinary men; a stately speech;  
 Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
 Religious men, who give to God and  
 man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had  
 come  
 To gather leeches, being old and poor:  
 Employment hazardous and wearisome!  
 And he had many hardships to endure:  
 From pond to pond he roamed, from  
 moor to moor;  
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice  
 or chance,  
 And in this way he gained an honest  
 maintenance.

The old Man still stood talking by my  
 side;  
 But now his voice to me was like a  
 stream  
 Scarce heard; nor word from word  
 could I divide;  
 And the whole body of the Man did seem  
 Like one whom I had met with in a  
 dream;  
 Or like a man from some far region sent.  
 To give me human strength, by apt ad-  
 monishment.

My former thoughts returned: the fear  
 that kills;  
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;  
 Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills;  
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
 —Perplexed, and longing to be com-  
 forted,  
 My question eagerly did I renew.  
 "How is it that you live, and what is it  
 you do?"

He with a smile did then his words  
 repeat;  
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far  
 and wide  
 He travelled; stirring thus about his  
 feet  
 The waters of the pools where they  
 abide.  
 "Once I could meet with them on every  
 side;  
 But they have dwindled long by slow  
 decay;  
 Yet still I persevere, and find them  
 where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely  
 place,  
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all  
 troubled me:  
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him  
 pace  
 About the weary moors continually,  
 Wandering about alone and silently.  
 While I these thoughts within myself  
 pursued,  
 He, having made a pause, the same dis-  
 course renewed.

And soon with this he other matter  
 blended,  
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind,  
 But stately in the main; and when he  
 ended,  
 I could have laughed myself to scorn, to  
 find  
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.  
 "God," said I, "be my help and stay  
 secure;  
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the  
 lonely moor!" 1802. 1807.

#### I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ

The direct influence of Milton seems evident  
 in many of the following sonnets, and is con-  
 firmed by the entry in Dorothy Wordsworth's  
 Journal, May 21, 1802: "William wrote two  
 sonnets of Buonaparte, after I had read Milton's  
 sonnets to him." See also Wordsworth's note on  
 "Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room."  
 p. 48.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain  
 And an unthinking grief! The tenderest  
 mood  
 Of that Man's mind—what can it be?  
 what food  
 Fed his first hopes? what knowledge  
 could he gain?  
 'Tis not in battles that from youth we  
 train  
 The Governor who must be wise and  
 good,  
 And temper with the sternness of the  
 brain  
 Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-  
 hood.  
 Wisdom doth live with children round  
 her knees:  
 Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the  
 talk  
 Man holds with week-day man in the  
 hourly walk  
 Of the mind's business: these are the  
 degrees

By which true Sway doth mount; this  
is the stalk  
True Power doth grow on; and her rights  
are these. 1802. 1807.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER  
BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

"We left London on Saturday morning at half-past five or six, the 30th of July. We mounted the Dover coach at Charing Cross. It was a beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, with the river, and a multitude of little boats, made a most beautiful sight as we crossed Westminster Bridge. The houses were not overhung by their cloud of smoke, and they were spread out endlessly; yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a fierce light, that there was even something like the purity of one of nature's own grand spectacles." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, July, 1802.)

EARTH has not anything to show more  
fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass  
by

A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth, like a garment,  
wear

The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!  
1802. 1807.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE,  
NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802

"We had delightful walks after the heat of the day was passed—seeing far off in the west the coast of England like a cloud crested with Dover Castle, which was but like the summit of the cloud—the evening star and the glory of the sky, the reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself, purple waves brighter than precious stones, for ever melting away upon the sands. . . . Nothing in romance was ever half so beautiful. Now came in view, as the evening star sunk down, and the colors of the west faded away, the two lights of England." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, August, 1802.)

FAIR Star of evening, Splendor of the  
west,  
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's  
brink

Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem,  
to sink  
On England's bosom; yet well pleased  
to rest,  
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest  
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I  
think,  
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and  
should'st wink,  
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners, drest  
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky  
spot  
Beneath thee, that is England; there she  
lies.  
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one  
lot,  
One life, one glory!—I, with many a fear  
For my dear Country, many heartfelt  
sighs,  
Among men who do not love her, linger  
here. 1802. 1807.

IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING,  
CALM AND FREE

This was composed on the beach near Calais, in the autumn of 1802. (*Wordsworth*.)

The last six lines are addressed to Wordsworth's sister Dorothy. See note to the preceding Sonnet.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration: the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the  
Sea:

Listen! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest  
with me here,  
If thou appear untouched by solemn  
thought,

Thy nature is not therefore less divine:  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the  
year;

And worship'st at the Temple's inner  
shrine.

God being with thee when we know it  
not. 1802. 1807.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE  
VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in  
fee;  
And was the safeguard of the west: the  
worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,  
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.  
 She was a maiden City, bright and free;  
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;  
 And when she took unto herself a Mate,  
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.  
 And what if she had seen those glories  
 fade,  
 Those titles vanish, and that strength  
 decay;  
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid  
 When her long life hath reached its final  
 day:  
 Men are we, and must grieve when even  
 the Shade  
 Of that which once was great, is passed  
 away. 1802. 1807.

## TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of  
 men!  
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his  
 plough  
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless  
 den;—  
 O miserable Chieftain! where and when  
 Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not;  
 do thou  
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful  
 brow:  
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise  
 again,  
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast  
 left behind  
 Powers that will work for thee: air,  
 earth, and skies;  
 There's not a breathing of the common  
 wind  
 That will forget thee; thou hast great  
 allies;  
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
 And love, and man's unconquerable  
 mind. 1802. 1808.

## NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER, 1802

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;  
 And saw, while sea was calm and air  
 was clear,  
 The coast of France—the coast of France  
 how near!  
 Drawn almost into frightful neighbor-  
 hood.  
 I shrunk: for verily the barrier flood  
 Was like a lake, or river bright and  
 fair,

A span of waters; yet what power is  
 there!  
 What mightiness for evil and for good!  
 Even so doth God protect us if we be  
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and  
 waters roll,  
 Strength to the brave, and Power, and  
 Deity;  
 Yet in themselves are nothing! One  
 decree  
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the  
 soul  
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free.  
 1802. 1807.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER,  
1802

This was written immediately after my return  
 from France to London, when I could not but  
 be struck, as here described, with the vanity  
 and parade of our own country, especially in  
 great towns and cities, as contrasted with the  
 quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the  
 revolution had produced in France. This must  
 be borne in mind, or else the reader may think  
 that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have  
 exaggerated the mischief engendered and fos-  
 tered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would  
 not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feel-  
 ing I entered into the struggle carried on by the  
 Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped  
 power of the French. Many times have I gone  
 from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we  
 were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap  
 as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morn-  
 ing, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper  
 from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of  
 mind in which I then was may be found in my  
 Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in  
 these Sonnets. (Wordsworth.)

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must  
 look  
 For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd,  
 To think that now our life is only drest  
 For show: mean handy-work of crafts-  
 man, cook,  
 Or groom!—We must run glittering like  
 a brook  
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
 The wealthiest man among us is the  
 best:  
 No grandeur now in nature or in book  
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
 This is idolatry: and these we adore—  
 Plain living and high thinking are no  
 more:  
 The homely beauty of the good old  
 cause  
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful inno-  
 cence,  
 And pure religion breathing household  
 laws. 1802. 1807.

## LONDON, 1802

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:  
 England hath need of thee; she is a fen  
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.  
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:  
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:  
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
 So didst thou travel on life's common way.  
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.  
*1802. 1807.*

GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN  
AMONG US

GREAT men have been among us; hands  
 that penned  
 And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none:  
 The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,  
 Young Vane, and others who called  
 Milton friend.  
 These moralists could act and comprehend:  
 They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
 In splendor: what strength was, that would not bend  
 But in magnanimous meekness. France,  
 'tis strange,  
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.  
 Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
 No single volume paramount, no code,  
 No master spirit, no determined road;  
 But equally a want of books and men!  
*1802. 1807.*

## IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea

3

Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
 Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"  
 Roused though it be full often to a mood  
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
 That this most famous stream in bogs and sands  
 Should perish; and to evil and to good  
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
 Armory of the invincible Knights of old:  
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue  
 That Shakspeare spake; the faith and morals hold  
 Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung  
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold. *1802 or 1803. April 16, 1803.*

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN  
MEMORY

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed  
 Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart  
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert  
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed  
 I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?  
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,  
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
 For dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men:  
 And I by my affection was beguiled:  
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
 Among the many movements of his mind,  
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child!  
*1802 or 1803. Sept. 17, 1803.*

## TO HARTLEY COLERIDGE

## SIX YEARS OLD

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are brought;  
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,  
 And fittest to unutterable thought  
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;

Thou faery voyager! that dost float  
 In such clear water, that thy boat  
 May rather seem  
 To brood on air than on an earthly  
 stream;  
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
 Where earth and heaven do make one  
 imagery;  
 O blessed vision! happy child!  
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,  
 I think of thee with many fears  
 For what may be thy lot in future years.  
 I thought of times when Pain might  
 be thy guest,  
 Lord of thy house and hospitality;  
 And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest  
 But when she sate within the touch of  
 thee.  
 O too industrious folly!  
 O vain and causeless melancholy!  
 Nature will either end thee quite;  
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
 Preserve for thee, by individual right.  
 A young lamb's heart among the full-  
 grown flocks.  
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,  
 Or the injuries of to-morrow?  
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn  
 brings forth,  
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,  
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;  
 A gem that glitters while it lives,  
 And no forewarning gives;  
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a  
 strife  
 Slips in a moment out of life.

1802. 1807.

## TO THE DAISY

In youth from rock to rock I went,  
 From hill to hill in discontent  
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,  
 Most pleased when most uneasy;  
 But now my own delights I make,—  
 My thirst at every rill can slake,  
 And gladly Nature's love partake,  
 Of Thee, sweet Daisy!

Thee Winter in the garland wears  
 That thinly decks his few gray hairs;  
 Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,  
 That she may sun thee;  
 Whole Summer-fields are thine by right;  
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight!  
 Doth in thy crimson head delight  
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,  
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane;

Pleased at his greeting thee again;  
 Yet nothing daunted,  
 Nor grieved if thou be set at nought:  
 And oft alone in nooks remote  
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,  
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews  
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose:  
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews  
 Her head impearling;  
 Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,  
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame;  
 Thou art indeed by many a claim  
 The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,  
 Or, some bright day of April sky,  
 Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie  
 Near the green holly,  
 And wearily at length should fare;  
 He needs but look about, and there  
 Thou art!—a friend at hand, to scare  
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,  
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,  
 Have I derived from thy sweet power  
 Some apprehension;  
 Some steady love; some brief delight;  
 Some memory that had taken flight;  
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right;  
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,  
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
 I drink out of an humbler urn  
 A lowlier pleasure;  
 The homely sympathy that heeds  
 The common life our nature breeds;  
 A wisdom fitted to the needs  
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,  
 When thou art up, alert and gay,  
 Then, cheerful Flower! my spirits play  
 With kindred gladness:  
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest  
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
 Hath often eased my pensive breast  
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,  
 All seasons through, another debt,  
 Which I, wherever thou art met,  
 To thee am owing;  
 An instinct call it, a blind sense;  
 A happy, genial influence.  
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,  
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run  
 Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun  
 As ready to salute the sun  
     As lark or leveret,  
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;  
 Nor be less dear to future men  
 Than in old time; thou not in vain  
     Art Nature's favorite.<sup>1</sup> 1802. 1807.

## TO THE SAME FLOWER

With little here to do or see  
 Of things that in the great world be,  
 Daisy! again I talk to thee,  
     For thou art worthy.  
 Thou unassuming Common-place  
 Of Nature, with that homely face,  
 And yet with something of a grace,  
     Which Love makes for thee!

Of on the dappled turf at ease  
 I sit, and play with similes,  
 Loose types of things through all de-  
     grees,  
     Thoughts of thy raising:  
 And many a fond and idle name  
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
 As is the humor of the game,  
     While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;  
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,  
 In thy simplicity the sport  
     Of all temptations;  
 A queen in crown of rubies drest;  
 A starveling in a scanty vest;  
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
     Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye  
 Staring to threaten and defy.  
 That thought comes next—and instantly  
     The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish—and behold  
 A silver shield with boss of gold,  
 That spreads itself, some faery bold  
     In fight to cover!

I see thee glittering from afar—  
 And then thou art a pretty star;  
 Not quite so fair as many are  
     In heaven above thee!  
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—  
 May peace come never to his nest,  
     Who shall reprove thee!

<sup>1</sup> See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honors formerly paid to this flower.  
 (Wordsworth.)

Bright *Flower!* for by that name at last,  
 When all my reveries are past,  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
     Sweet silent creature!  
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
     Of thy meek nature! 1802. 1807.

## TO THE DAISY

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is every  
     where,  
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,  
 And all the long year through, the heir  
     Of joy or sorrow:  
 Methinks that there abides in thee  
 Some concord with humanity,  
 Given to no other flower I see  
     The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?  
 A thoughtless Thing! who, once un-  
     blest,  
 Does little on his memory rest,  
     Or on his reason,  
 And Thou would'st teach him how to  
     find  
 A shelter under every wind,  
 A hope for times that are unkind  
     And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,  
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
 With friends to greet thee, or without,  
     Yet pleased and willing;  
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
 And all things suffering from all,  
 Thy function apostolical  
     In peace fulfilling. 1802. 1807.

## THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that  
     shed  
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
 With brightest sunshine round me  
     spread  
     Of spring's unclouded weather,  
 In this sequestered nook how sweet  
 To sit upon my orchard-seat!  
 And birds and flowers once more to  
     greet,  
     My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
 In all this covert of the blest:  
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest  
     In joy of voice and pinion!



Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,  
Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May;  
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flow-  
ers,  
Make all one band of paramours,  
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
Art sole in thy employment:  
A Life, a Presence like the Air,  
Scattering thy gladness without care,  
Too blest with any one to pair;  
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
Yet seeming still to hover;  
There! where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
A Brother of the dancing leaves;  
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves  
Pours forth his song in gushes;  
As if by that exulting strain  
He mocked and treated with disdain  
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,  
While fluttering in the bushes.

1803. 1807.

### YEW-TREES

Compare the note on *A Night-Piece*.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton  
Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the  
midst  
Of its own darkness, as it stood of  
yore;  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the  
bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's heaths; or those that  
crossed the sea  
And drew their sounding bows at Azin-  
cour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom pro-  
found  
This solitary Tree! a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of  
note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
Joined in one solemn and capacious  
grove;  
Huge trunks; and each particular trunk  
a growth  
Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;  
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and  
looks  
That threaten the profane;—a pillared  
shade,  
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown  
hue,  
By sheddings from the pining umbrage  
tinged  
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose,  
decked  
With unrejoicing berries—ghostly  
Shapes  
May meet at noontide; Fear and trem-  
bling Hope,  
Silence and Foresight; Death the Skele-  
ton  
And Time the Shadow;—there to cele-  
brate,  
As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
United worship; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost  
caves. 1803. 1815.

### AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

#### SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

For illustration, see my *Sister's Journal*.  
(*Wordsworth*).

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,  
At thought of what I now behold:  
As vapors breathed from dungeons  
cold,  
Strike pleasure dead,  
So sadness comes from out the mould  
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,  
And thou forbidden to appear?  
As if it were thyself that's here  
I shrink with pain;  
And both my wishes and my fear  
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight!—  
away  
Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to  
stay;

sh chastened feelings would I pay  
The tribute due  
him, and aught that hides his clay  
From mortal view.

sh as the flower, whose modest worth  
sang, his genius "glinted" forth,  
e like a star that touching earth,  
For so it seems,  
h glorify its humble birth  
With matchless beams.

piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,  
struggling heart, where be they  
now?—  
l soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
The prompt, the brave,  
t, with the obscurest, in the low  
And silent grave.

ourned with thousands, but as one  
e deeply grieved, for He was gone  
ose light I hailed when first it shone,  
And showed my youth  
v Verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth.

s! where'er the current tends,  
ret pursues and with it blends,—  
ge Criffel's hoary top ascends  
By Skiddaw seen,—  
ghbors we were, and loving friends  
We might have been;

e friends though diversely inclined;  
heart with heart and mind with  
mind,  
ere the main fibres are entwined,  
Through Nature's skill,  
even by contraries be joined  
More closely still.

tear will start, and let it flow;  
u "poor Inhabitant below,"  
his dread moment—even so—  
Might we together  
e sate and talked where gowans  
blow,  
Or on wild heather.

at treasures would have then been  
placed  
hin my reach; of knowledge graced  
fancy what a rich repast!  
But why go on?—  
spare to sweep, thou mournful  
blast,  
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,  
(Not three weeks past the Stripling  
died.)  
Lies gathered to his Father's side,  
Soul-moving sight!  
Yet one to which is not denied  
Some sad delight:

For he is safe, a quiet bed  
Hath early found among the dead,  
Harbored where none can be misled,  
Wronged, or distressed;  
And surely here it may be said  
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace  
Checked oft-times in a devious race,  
May He who halloweth the place  
Where Man is laid  
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace  
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere  
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,  
Music that sorrow comes not near,  
A ritual hymn,  
Chanted in love that casts out fear  
By Seraphim.

1803. 1845.

### TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND

This delightful creature and her demeanor are particularly described in my Sister's Journal. (*Wordsworth.*)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower  
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!  
Twice seven consenting years have shed  
Their utmost bounty on thy head:  
And these gray rocks; that household  
lawn;

Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;  
This fall of water that doth make  
A murmur near the silent lake;  
This little bay; a quiet road  
That holds in shelter thy Abode—  
In truth together do ye seem  
Like something fashioned in a dream;  
Such Forms as from their covert peep  
When earthly cares are laid asleep!  
But, O fair Creature! in the light  
Of common day, so heavenly bright,  
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art  
I bless thee with a human heart;  
God shield thee to thy latest years!  
Thee neither know I, nor thy peers;  
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray  
 For thee when I am far away :  
 For never saw I mien, or face,  
 In which more plainly I could trace  
 Benignity and home-bred sense  
 Ripening in perfect innocence.  
 Here scattered, like a random seed,  
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need  
 The embarrassed look of shy distress,  
 And maidenly shamefacedness :  
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
 The freedom of a Mountaineer :  
 A face with gladness overspread !  
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !  
 And seamliness complete, that sways  
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;  
 With no restraint, but such as springs  
 From quick and eager visitings  
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach  
 Of thy few words of English speech :  
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife  
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !  
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,  
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—  
 Thus beating up against the wind.  
 What hand but would a garland cull  
 For thee who art so beautiful ?  
 O happy pleasure ! here to dwell  
 Beside thee in some heathy dell ;  
 Adopt your homely ways, and dress,  
 A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdless !  
 But I could frame a wish for thee  
 More like a grave reality :  
 Thou art to me but as a wave  
 Of the wild sea ; and I would have  
 Some claim upon thee, if I could,  
 Though but of common neighborhood.  
 What joy to hear thee, and to see !  
 Thy elder Brother I would be,  
 Thy Father—anything to thee !  
 Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its  
 grace  
 Hath led me to this lonely place.  
 Joy have I had ; and going hence  
 I bear away my recompense.  
 In spots like these it is we prize  
 Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :  
 Then, why should I be loth to stir ?  
 I feel this place was made for her ;  
 To give new pleasure like the past,  
 Continued long as life shall last.  
 Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,  
 Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part :  
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
 As fair before me shall behold,  
 As I do now, the cabin small,  
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;  
 And Thee, the spirit of them all !

1803. 1807.

## STEPPING WESTWARD

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward ?" (Wordsworth.)

"What, you are stepping westward ?"  
 —"Yea."

—"T'would be a wildish destiny,  
 If we, who thus together roam  
 In a strange Land, and far from home,  
 Were in this place the guests of Chance :  
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance  
 Though home or shelter he had none,  
 With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;  
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ;  
 And stepping westward seemed to be  
 A kind of heavenly destiny :  
 I liked the greeting ; 't was a sound  
 Of something without place or bound ;  
 And seemed to give me spiritual right  
 To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
 Was walking by her native lake :  
 The salutation had to me  
 The very sound of courtesy :  
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye  
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,  
 The echo of the voice enwrought  
 A human sweetness with the thought  
 Of travelling through the world that lay  
 Before me in my endless way.

1803. 1807.

## THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,  
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !  
 Reaping and singing by herself ;  
 Stop here, or gently pass !  
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
 And sings a melancholy strain ;  
 O listen ! for the Vale profound  
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chant  
 More welcome notes to weary bands  
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
 Among Arabian sands :  
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
 Breaking the silence of the seas  
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago :  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day ?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang  
As if her song could have no ending ;  
I saw her singing at her work,  
And o'er the sickle bending ;—  
I listened, motionless and still ;  
And, as I mounted up the hill  
The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more.

1803. 1807.

## YARROW UNVISITED

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,—Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow !"—(Wordsworth).

FROM Stirling castle we had seen  
The mazy Forth unravelled :  
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,  
And with the Tweed had travelled ;  
And when we came to Clovenford,  
Then said my "winsome Marrow,"  
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,  
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town,  
Who have been buying, selling,  
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own ;  
Each maiden to her dwelling !  
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,  
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !  
But we will downward with the Tweed,  
Nor turn aside to Yarrow."

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,  
Both lying right before us ;  
And Dryborough, where with chiming  
Tweed

The lintwhites sing in chorus ;  
There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land  
Made blithe with plough and harrow :  
Why throw away a needful day  
To go in search of Yarrow ?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare,  
That glides the dark hills under ?  
There are a thousand such elsewhere  
As worthy of your wonder."

—Strange words they seemed of slight  
and scorn

My True-love sighed for sorrow ;  
And looked me in the face, to think  
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

"Oh ! green," said I, "are Yarrow's  
holms,

And sweet is Yarrow flowing !  
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,  
But we will leave it growing.  
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,  
We'll wander Scotland thorough ;  
But, though so near, we will not turn  
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake  
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;  
The swan on still St. Mary's Lake  
Float double, swan and shadow !  
We will not see them ; will not go,  
To-day, nor yet to-morrow,  
Enough if in our hearts we know  
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !  
It must, or we shall rue it :  
We have a vision of our own ;  
Ah ! why should we undo it ?  
The treasured dreams of times long past,  
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !  
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,  
'Twill be another Yarrow !

"If Care with freezing years should  
come,  
And wandering seem but folly.—  
Should we be loth to stir from home,  
And yet be melancholy ;  
Should life be dull, and spirits low,  
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,  
That earth has something yet to show,  
The bonny holms of Yarrow !"

1803. 1807.

## ODE

## INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

"In my *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Childhood*, I do not profess to give a literal representation of the state of the affections and of the moral being in childhood. I record my own feelings at that time—my absolute spirituality, my 'all-soulness,' if I may so speak. At that time I could not believe that I should lie down quietly in the grave, and that my body would moulder into dust." (Knight's *Wordsworth*, II, 326. See also, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the article "Poetry.")

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove,  
and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,  
 To me did seem  
 Apparelled in celestial light,  
 The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
 It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—  
 Turn whereso'er I may,  
 By night or day,  
 The things which I have seen I now can  
 see no more.

## II

The Rainbow comes and goes,  
 And lovely is the Rose,  
 The Moon doth with delight  
 Look round her when the heavens are  
 bare ;  
 Waters on a starry night  
 Are beautiful and fair ;  
 The sunshine is a glorious birth ;  
 But yet I know, where'er I go,  
 That there hath past away a glory from  
 the earth.

## III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous  
 song,  
 And while the young lambs bound  
 As to the tabor's sound,  
 To me alone there came a thought of  
 grief ;  
 A timely utterance gave that thought  
 relief,  
 And I again am strong :  
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from  
 the steep ;  
 No more shall grief of mine the season  
 wrong ;  
 I hear the Echoes through the moun-  
 tains throng,  
 The Winds come to me from the fields  
 of sleep.  
 And all the earth is gay ;  
 Land and sea  
 Give themselves up to jollity,  
 And with the heart of May  
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—  
 Thou Child of Joy,  
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,  
 thou happy Shepherd-boy !

## IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the  
 call  
 Ye to each other make : I see  
 The heavens laugh with you in your  
 jubilee ;  
 My heart is at your festival,  
 My head hath its coronal,  
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel  
 it all.

Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
 While Earth herself is adorning,  
 This sweet May-morning,  
 And the Children are culling  
 On every side,  
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines  
 warm,  
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's  
 arm :—  
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !  
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one.  
 A single Field which I have looked  
 upon,  
 Both of them speak of something that is  
 gone :  
 The Pansy at my feet  
 Doth the same tale repeat :  
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?  
 Where is it now, the glory and the  
 dream ?

## V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forget-  
 ting :  
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's  
 Star,  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
 And cometh from afar :  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From God, who is our home :  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to  
 close  
 Upon the growing Boy,  
 But he beholds the light, and whence it  
 flows,  
 He sees it in his joy ;  
 The Youth, who daily farthest from the  
 east  
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
 And by the vision splendid  
 Is on his way attended ;  
 At length the Man perceives it die  
 away,  
 And fade into the light of common day.

## VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her  
 own ;  
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural  
 kind,  
 And, even with something of a Mother's  
 mind,  
 And no unworthy aim,  
 The homely Nurse doth all she can  
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate  
 Man,

Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he  
came.

## VII

Behold the Child among his new-born  
blisses,  
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !  
See, where 'mid work of his own hand  
he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's  
eyes !  
See, at his feet, some little plan or  
chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of hu-  
man life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learned  
art ;  
A wedding or a festival,  
A mourning or a funeral ;  
And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song :  
Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;  
But it will not be long  
Ere this be thrown aside,  
And with new joy and pride  
The little Actor cons another part ;  
Filling from time to time his " humor-  
ous stage "  
With all the Persons, down to palsied  
Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equip-  
age ;  
As if his whole vocation  
Were endless imitation.

## VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth  
belie  
Thy Soul's immensity ;  
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost  
keep  
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the  
blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal  
deep,  
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—  
Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !  
On whom those truths do rest,  
Which we are toiling all our lives to  
find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the  
grave ;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a  
Slave,  
A Presence which is not to be put by ;

Thou little Child, yet glorious in the  
might  
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's  
height,  
Why with such earnest pains dost thou  
provoke  
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at  
strife ?  
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly  
freight,  
And custom lie upon thee with a  
weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

## IX

O joy ! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive !  
The thought of our past years in me  
doth breed  
Perpetual benediction : not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be  
blest—  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering  
in his breast :—  
Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise ;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings ;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realized,  
High instincts before which our mortal  
Nature  
Did tremble like a guilty Thing sur-  
prised :  
But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
Are yet a master light of all our seeing :  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power  
to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the  
being  
Of the eternal Silence : truths that  
wake,  
To perish never ;  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-  
deavor,  
Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy !  
Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal  
 sea  
 Which brought us hither,  
 Can in a moment travel thither,  
 And see the Children sport upon the  
 shore,  
 And hear the mighty waters rolling  
 evermore.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous  
 song!  
 And let the young Lambs bound  
 As to the tabor's sound!  
 We in thought will join your throng,  
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
 Ye that through your hearts to-day  
 Feel the gladness of the May!  
 What though the radiance which was  
 once so bright  
 Be now forever taken from my sight,  
 Though nothing can bring back the  
 hour  
 Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the  
 flower;  
 We will grieve not, rather find  
 Strength in what remains behind;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be;  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 Out of human suffering;  
 In the faith that looks through  
 death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic  
 mind.

## XI

And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills,  
 and Groves,  
 Forebode not any severing of our loves!  
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your  
 might;  
 I only have relinquished one delight  
 To live beneath your more habitual  
 sway.  
 I love the Brooks which down their  
 channels fret,  
 Even more than when I tripped lightly  
 as they;  
 The innocent brightness of a new-born  
 Day  
 Is lovely yet;  
 The Clouds that gather round the set-  
 ting sun  
 Do take a sober coloring from an eye  
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mor-  
 tality;  
 Another race hath been, and other  
 palms are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which  
 we live,  
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and  
 fears,  
 To me the meanest flower that blows  
 can give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for  
 tears.  
 1803-6. 1807.

## TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
 I hear thee and rejoice.  
 O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
 Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass  
 Thy twofold shout I hear,  
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,  
 Of sunshine and of flowers.  
 Thou bringest unto me a tale  
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!  
 Even yet thou art to me  
 No bird, but an invisible thing.  
 A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days  
 I listened to; that Cry  
 Which made me look a thousand ways  
 In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
 Through woods and on the green;  
 And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
 Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;  
 Can lie upon the plain  
 And listen, till I do beget  
 That golden time again.

O blessèd Bird! the earth we pace  
 Again appears to be  
 An unsubstantial, faery place;  
 That is fit home for Thee!

1802. 1807.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF  
DELIGHT

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of  
 this poem was four lines composed as a part of  
 the verses on the Highland Girl. Though begin-  
 ning in this way, it was written from my heart,  
 as is sufficiently obvious. (Wordsworth.)

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
 When first she gleamed upon my sight;

A lovely Apparition sent  
To be a moment's ornament ;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view.  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too !  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin-liberty ;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;  
A Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food ;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and  
smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine ;  
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A Traveller between life and death ;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and  
skill ;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command ;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light.

1804. 1807.

#### I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves. (Wordsworth.)

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils ;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay :  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced ; but  
they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :  
A poet could not but be gay,

In such a jocund company :  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had  
brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude ;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

1804. 1807.

#### THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to enquire of him after her son. (Wordsworth.)

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,  
Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?  
Oh find me, prosperous or undone !  
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,  
Why am I ignorant of the same,  
That I may rest, and neither blame  
Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

Seven years, alas ! to have received  
No tidings of an only child ;  
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,  
And been for evermore beguiled ;  
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !  
I catch at them, and then I miss ;  
Was ever darkness like to this ?

He was among the prime in worth,  
An object beauteous to behold ;  
Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth  
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :  
If things ensued that wanted grace,  
As hath been said, they were not base ;  
And never blush was on my face.

Ah ! little doth the young one dream,  
When full of play and childish cares,  
What power is in his wildest scream,  
Heard by his mother unawares !  
He knows it not, he cannot guess :  
Years to a mother bring distress ;  
But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long  
From that ill thought ; and, being blind,  
Said, " Pride shall help me in my wrong ;  
Kind mother have I been, as kind  
As ever breathed : " and that is true ;  
I've wet my path with tears like dew,  
Weeping for him when no one knew.



My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,  
 Hopeless of honor and of gain,  
 Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;  
 Think not of me with grief and pain:  
 I now can see with better eyes;  
 And worldly grandeur I despise,  
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,  
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;  
 They mount—how short a voyage brings  
 The wanderers back to their delight!  
 Chains tie us down by land and sea;  
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be  
 All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,  
 Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;  
 Or thou upon a desert thrown  
 Inheritest the lion's den;  
 Or hast been summoned to the deep,  
 Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep  
 An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts; but none will force  
 Their way to me: 'tis falsely said  
 That there was ever intercourse  
 Between the living and the dead;  
 For, surely, then I should have sight  
 Of him I wait for day and night,  
 With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds;  
 I dread the rustling of the grass;  
 The very shadows of the clouds  
 Have power to shake me as they pass:  
 I question things and do not find  
 One that will answer to my mind;  
 And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie  
 My troubles, and beyond relief:  
 If any chance to heave a sigh,  
 They pity me, and not my grief.  
 Then come to me, my Son, or send  
 Some tidings that my woes may end;  
 I have no other earthly friend!

1804? 1807.

#### ODE TO DUTY

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!  
 O Duty! if that name thou love  
 Who art a light to guide, a rod  
 To check the erring, and reprove;  
 Thou, who art victory and law  
 When empty terrors overawe:  
 From vain temptations dost set free:  
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail  
 humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye  
 Be on them; who, in love and truth,  
 Where no misgiving is, rely  
 Upon the genial sense of youth:  
 Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot  
 Who do thy work, and know it not:  
 Oh! if through confidence misplaced  
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread  
 Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,  
 And happy will our nature be,  
 When love is an unerring light,  
 And joy its own security.  
 And they a blissful course may hold  
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
 Live in the spirit of this creed:  
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to  
 their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,  
 No sport of every random gust,  
 Yet being to myself a guide,  
 Too blindly have reposed my trust:  
 And oft, when in my heart was heard  
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred  
 The task, in smoother walks to stray;  
 But thee I now would serve more  
 strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
 I supplicate for thy control:  
 But in the quietness of thought:  
 Me this unchartered freedom tires;  
 I feel the weight of chance-desires:  
 My hopes no more must change their  
 name,  
 I long for a repose that ever is the  
 same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
 The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
 Nor know we anything so fair  
 As is the smile upon thy face:  
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds  
 And fragrance in thy footing treads:  
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;  
 And the most ancient heavens, through  
 Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!  
 I call thee: I myself commend  
 Unto thy guidance from this hour;  
 Oh, let my weakness have an end!  
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
 The spirit of self-sacrifice;  
 The confidence of reason give:  
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman  
 let me live! 1805. 1807.

## TO A SKY-LARK

UP with me! up with me into the clouds!  
 For thy song, Lark, is strong;  
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds!  
     Singing, singing,  
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing  
 Lift me, guide me till I find  
 That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses  
 dreary  
 And to-day my heart is weary;  
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,  
 Up to thee would I fly.  
 There is madness about thee, and joy  
     divine  
 In that song of thine;  
 Lift me, guide me high and high  
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning  
 Thou art laughing and scorning;  
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy  
     rest.  
 And, though little troubled with sloth,  
 Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth  
 To be such a traveller as I.  
 Happy, happy Liver,  
 With a soul as strong as a mountain  
     river  
 Pouring out praise to the Almighty  
     Giver,  
 Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways  
     must wind;  
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
 As full of gladness and as free of  
     heaven,  
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on,  
 And hope for higher raptures, when  
 life's day is done. 1805. 1807.

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE  
 CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR  
 GEORGE BEAUMONT

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged  
 Pile!  
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of  
 thee:  
 I saw thee every day; and all the while  
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!  
 So like, so very like, was day to day!  
 Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was  
     there;  
 It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed  
 no sleep;  
 No mood, which season takes away, or  
     brings:  
 I could have fancied that the mighty  
 Deep  
 Was even the gentlest of all gentle  
 Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's  
 hand,  
 To express what then I saw; and add  
 the gleam,  
 The light that never was, on sea or  
 land,  
 The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary  
 Pile  
 Amid a world how different from this!  
 Beside a sea that could not cease to  
 smile;  
 On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-  
 house divine  
 Of peaceful years; a chronicle of  
 heaven;—  
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine  
 The very sweetest had to thee been  
 given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,  
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;  
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,  
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,  
 Such Picture would I at that time have  
 made:

And seen the soul of truth in every part,  
 A steadfast peace that might not be  
 betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no  
 more;

I have submitted to a new control:  
 A power is gone, which nothing can  
 restore;

A deep distress hath humanized my  
 Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold  
A smiling sea, and be what I have been :  
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;  
This, which I know, I speak with mind  
serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would  
have been the Friend,  
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,  
This work of thine I blame not, but  
commend ;  
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and  
well,  
Well chosen in the spirit that is here ;  
That Hulk which labors in the deadly  
swell,

This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sub-  
lime,

I love to see the look with which it  
braves,

Cased in the unfeeling armor of old  
time,

The lightning, the fierce wind, and  
trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives  
alone,

Housed in a dream, at distance from the  
Kind !

Such happiness, wherever it be known,  
Is to be pitied ; for 't is surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient  
cheer,

And frequent sights of what is to be  
borne !

Such sights, or worse, as are before me  
here.—

Not without hope we suffer and we  
mourn. 1805. 1807.

#### TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAK-  
ING LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !

—There is a nest in a green dale,

A harbor and a hold ;

Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt  
see

Thy own heart-stirring days, and be  
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,  
And treading among flowers of joy

Which at no season fade,  
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,  
Shalt show us how divine a thing  
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,  
Nor leave thee, when gray hairs are nigh,  
A melancholy slave ;  
But an old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,  
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

1801? February 11, 1802.

#### FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS  
COMMENCEMENT

An extract from the long poem of my own  
poetical education. It was first published by  
Coleridge in his "Friend," which is the reason  
of its having had a place in every edition of my  
poems since. (*Wordsworth.*) From *The Prelude*,  
Bk. XI.

OH ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !  
For mighty were the auxiliars which  
then stood

Upon our side, we who were strong in  
love !

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven !—

Oh ! times,  
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding  
ways

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance !

When Reason seemed the most to assert  
her rights,

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime Enchantress—to assist the work,

Which then was going forward in her  
name !

Not favored spots alone, but the whole  
earth,

The beauty wore of promise, that which  
sets

(As at some moment might not be unfelt  
Among the bowers of paradise itself)

The budding rose above the rose full  
blown.

What temper at the prospect did not  
wake

To happiness unthought of ? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt  
away !

They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams,

The playfellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and  
strength

Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred  
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
 And dealt with whatsoever they found there  
 As if they had within some lurking right  
 To wield it;—they, too, who, of gentle mood,  
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to these  
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,  
 And in the region of their peaceful selves;—  
 Now was it that both found, the meek and lofty  
 Did both find, helpers to their heart's desire,  
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish;  
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,  
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!  
 But in the very world, which is the world  
 Of all of us,—the place where in the end  
 We find our happiness, or not at all!  
 1804. October 26, 1809.

#### CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

Suggested in part by an event which all England was lamenting—the death of Lord Nelson—and in part by the personal loss, which he still felt so keenly, his brother John's removal. On the 4th of February, 1806, Southey wrote thus to Sir Walter Scott: . . . 'Wordsworth was with me last week; he has been of late more employed in correcting his poems than in writing others; but one piece he has written, upon the ideal character of a soldier, than which I have never seen anything more full of meaning and sound thought. The subject was suggested by Nelson's most glorious death. . . .'  
 (Knight, *Life of Wordsworth*, II, 46-7.)

WHO is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
 That every man in arms should wish to be?  
 —It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought  
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:  
 Whose high endeavors are an inward light  
 That makes the path before him always bright:  
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern

What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;  
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,  
 But makes his moral being his prime care;  
 Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,  
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!  
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain;  
 In face of these doth exercise a power  
 Which is our human nature's highest dower;  
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves  
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives:  
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate  
 Her feeling, rendered more compassion-ate;  
 Is placable—because occasions rise  
 So often that demand such sacrifice;  
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,  
 As tempted more; more able to endure,  
 As more exposed to suffering and distress;  
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.  
 —'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends  
 Upon that law as on the best of friends;  
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted still  
 To evil for a guard against worse ill,  
 And what in quality or act is best  
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
 He labors good on good to fix, and owes  
 To virtue every triumph that he knows:  
 —Who, if he rise to station of command,  
 Rises by open means; and there will stand  
 On honorable terms, or else retire,  
 And in himself possess his own desire;  
 Who comprehends his trust, and to the same  
 Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;  
 And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait  
 For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;  
 Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,  
 Like showers of manna, if they come at all:  
 Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,  
 Or mild concerns of ordinary life,

A constant influence, a peculiar grace;  
 But who, if he be called upon to face  
 Some awful moment to which Heaven  
     has joined  
 Great issues, good or bad for human  
     kind,  
 Is happy as a Lover; and attired  
 With sudden brightness, like a Man in-  
     spired;  
 And, through the heat of conflict, keeps  
     the law  
 In calmness made, and sees what he  
     foresaw;  
 Or if an unexpected call succeed,  
 Come when it will, is equal to the need:  
 —He who, though thus endowed as with  
     a sense  
 And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
 Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
 To homefelt pleasures and to gentle  
     scenes;  
 Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he  
     be,  
 Are at his heart; and such fidelity  
 It is his darling passion to approve;  
 More brave for this, that he hath much  
     to love:—  
 'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,  
 Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
 Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—  
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or  
     not—  
 Plays, in the many games of life, that  
     one  
 Where what he most doth value must  
     be won:  
 Whom neither shape of danger can dis-  
     may,  
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray;  
 Who, not content that former worth  
     stand fast,  
 Looks forward, persevering to the last.  
 From well to better, daily self-surpass:  
 Who, whether praise of him must walk  
     the earth  
 For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
 Or he must fall, to sleep without his  
     fame,  
 And leave a dead unprofitable name—  
 Finds comfort in himself and in his  
     cause;  
 And, while the moral mist is gathering,  
     draws  
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's  
     applause:  
 This is the happy Warrior; this is He  
 That every Man in arms should wish to  
     be. 1806. 1807.

### YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO

YES, it was the mountain Echo,  
 Solitary, clear, profound,  
 Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,  
 Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply  
 To a babbling wanderer sent;  
 Like her ordinary cry,  
 Like—but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?  
 Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!  
 Slaves of folly, love, or strife—  
 Voices of two different natures?

Have not we too?—yes, we have  
 Answers, and we know not whence;  
 Echoes from beyond the grave,  
 Recognized intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear  
 Catches sometimes from afar—  
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear;  
 For of God,—of God they are.

1806. 1807.

### NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CON- VENT'S NARROW ROOM

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion with the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them,—in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakspeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three Sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote except an irregular one at school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly remember is—"I grieved for Buonaparté." One was never written down: the third, which was, I believe, preserved, I cannot particularize. (*Wordsworth.*)

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow  
     room;  
 And hermits are contented with their  
     cells;  
 And students with their pensive citadels;  
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his  
     loom,  
 Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for  
     bloom,  
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,  
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove  
     bells:

Intrude the prison, unto which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for  
me,  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be  
bound  
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of  
ground ;  
Pleased if some Souls (for such there  
needs must be)  
Who have felt the weight of too much  
liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have  
found. 1806 ? 1807.

## PERSONAL TALK

## I

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
To season my fireside with personal  
talk—  
Offriends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or neighbors, daily, weekly, in my sight :  
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies  
bright,  
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the  
stalk,  
These all wear out of me, like Forms,  
with chalk  
Painted on rich men's floors, for one  
feast-night.  
Better than such discourse doth silence  
long,  
Long, barren silence, square with my  
desire ;  
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,  
And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

## II

"Yet life," you say, "is life ; we have  
seen and see,  
And with a living pleasure we describe ;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.  
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth  
and glee  
Are fostered by the comment and the  
gibe."  
Even be it so ; yet still among your  
tribe,  
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank  
not me !  
Children are blest, and powerful ; their  
world lies  
More justly balanced ; partly at their  
feet,  
And part far from them : sweetest mel-  
odies

Are those that are by distance made  
more sweet ;  
Whose mind is but the mind of his own  
eyes,  
He is a Slave ; the meanest we can  
meet !

## III

Wings have we,—and as far as we can  
go,  
We may find pleasure : wilderness and  
wood,  
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
mood  
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books are each a world ; and  
books, we know,  
Are a substantial world, both pure and  
good :  
Round these, with tendrils strong as  
flesh and blood,  
Our pastime and our happiness will  
grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plente-  
ous store,  
Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
To which I listen with a ready ear ;  
Two shall be named, pre-eminently  
dear,—  
The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
Lamb.

## IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live re-  
mote  
From evil-speaking ; rancor, never  
sought,  
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or  
lie.  
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have  
I  
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and  
joyous thought :  
And thus from day to day my little boat  
Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably.  
Blessings be with them—and eternal  
praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler  
cares—  
The Poets, who on earth have made us  
heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly  
lays !  
Oh ! might my name be numbered  
among theirs,  
Then gladly would I end my mortal  
days. 1806 ? 1807.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH  
US

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :  
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !  
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;  
It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.  
*1806 ? 1807.*

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees  
Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,  
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;  
I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie  
Sleepless ! and soon the small birds' melodies  
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;  
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,  
And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :  
So do not let me wear to-night away :  
Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?  
Come, blessed barrier between day and day.  
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !  
*1806 ? 1807.*

NOVEMBER, 1806

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !  
Another mighty Empire overthrown !  
And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;  
The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.  
'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know  
That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;  
That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;  
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.  
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !  
We shall exult, if they who rule the land  
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,  
Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,  
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,  
And honor which they do not understand.  
*1806. 1807.*

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE  
SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,  
One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :  
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !  
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee  
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :  
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,  
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :  
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;  
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be  
That mountain floods should thunder as before,  
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee ?  
*1807. 1807.*

**HERE PAUSE: THE POET CLAIMS  
AT LEAST THIS PRAISE**

**HERE** pause : the poet claims at least this  
praise,  
That virtuous Liberty hath been the  
scope  
Of his pure song, which did not shrink  
from hope  
In the worst moment of these evil days ;  
From hope, the paramount *duty* that  
Heaven lays,  
For its own honor, on man's suffering  
heart.  
Never may from our souls one truth  
depart—  
That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled  
eye ;  
Nor—touched with due abhorrence of  
*their* guilt  
For whose dire ends tears flow, and  
blood is spilt,  
And justice labors in extremity—  
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built  
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !  
1811. 1815.

**LAODAMIA**

Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the  
trees growing and withering put the subject into  
my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving  
it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been  
given to it by any of the Ancients who have  
treated of it. It cost me more trouble than al-  
most anything of equal length I have ever writ-  
ten. (*Wordsworth.*)

"Laodamia is a very original poem ; I mean  
original with reference to your own manner.  
You have nothing like it. I should have seen  
it in a strange place, and greatly admired it,  
but not suspected its derivation. . . ." (Lamb  
to Wordsworth. Talfourd, *Final Memories of*  
*Charles Lamb*, p. 151.)

"WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
Vows have I made by fruitless hope in-  
spired ;  
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades  
forlorn  
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I  
required :  
Celestial pity I again implore ;—  
Restore him to my sight—great Jove,  
restore !"

So speaking, and by fervent love en-  
dowed  
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward  
lifts her hands ;  
While, like the sun emerging from a  
cloud.

Her countenance brightens—and her  
eye expands ;  
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stat-  
ure grows ;  
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ?—O  
joy !  
What doth she look on ?—whom doth she  
behold ?  
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?  
His vital presence ? his corporeal mould !  
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He ?  
And a God leads him, winged Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her  
with his wand  
That calms all fear ; "Such grace hath  
crowned thy prayer,  
Laodamia ! that at Jove's command  
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper  
air :  
He comes to tarry with thee three hours'  
space ;  
Accept the gift, behold him face to face !

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen  
her Lord to clasp ;  
Again that consummation she essayed ;  
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
As often as that eager grasp was made,  
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,  
And re-assume his place before her sight.

"Protesilaüs, lo ! thy guide is gone !  
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy  
voice :  
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne ;  
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on  
will rejoice.  
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed  
This precious boon ; and blest a sad  
abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia ! doth not leave  
His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though I  
be,  
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;  
But in reward of thy fidelity.  
And something also did my worth obtain ;  
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless  
gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle fore-  
told  
That the first Greek who touched the  
Trojan strand  
Should die : but me the threat could not  
withhold ;



A generous cause a victim did demand ;  
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;  
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest,  
best !

Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,  
Which then, when tens of thousands  
were deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal  
shore ;

Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here  
thou art—

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest  
deed,

Wert kind as resolute, and good as  
brave ;

And he, whose power restores thee, hath  
decreed

Thou should'st elude the malice of the  
grave :

Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair  
As when their breath enriched Thessa-  
lian air.

"No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow  
this ;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my  
side !

Give, on this well-known couch, one  
nuptial kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy  
bride !"

Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious  
Parcæ threw

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is  
past :

Nor should the change be mourned, even  
if the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast  
And surely as they vanish. Earth de-  
stroys

Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains ;  
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic  
pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to con-  
trol

Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the  
soul ;

A fervent, not ungovernable, love.

Thy transports moderate ; and meekly  
mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—"

"Ah, wherefore ?—Did not Hercules by  
force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the  
tomb

Alcestis, a reanimated corse,  
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal  
bloom ?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of  
years,

And Jason stood a youth 'mid youthful  
peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful—and they  
Yet further may relent : for mightier  
far

Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the  
sway

Of magic potent over sun and star,  
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,

And though his favorite seat be feeble  
woman's breast.

"But if thou goest, I follow—" "Peace !"   
he said ;—

She looked upon him and was calmed  
and cheered ;

The ghastly color from his lips had fled ;  
In his deportment, shape, and mien, ap-  
peared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,  
Brought from a pensive though a happy  
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits  
feel

In worlds whose course is equable and  
pure ;

No fears to beat away—no strife to  
heal—

The past unsighed for, and the future  
sure ;

Spake of heroic arts in graver mood  
Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beautiful—imaged  
there

In happier beauty ; more pellucid  
streams,

An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
And fields invested with purpureal  
gleams ;

Climes which the sun, who sheds the  
brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which  
hath earned

That privilege by virtue. "Ill," said he,  
"The end of man's existence I discerned,

Who from ignoble games and revelry

Could draw, when we had parted, vain  
delight,  
While tears were thy best pastime, day  
and night;

"And while my youthful peers before  
my eyes  
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enter-  
prise  
By martial sports,—or, seated in the  
tent,  
Chieftains and kings in council were de-  
tained;  
What time the fleet at Aulis lay en-  
chained.

"The wished-for wind was given:—I  
then revolved  
The oracle, upon the silent sea;  
And, if no worthier led the way, re-  
solved  
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should  
be  
The foremost prow in pressing to the  
strand,—  
Mine the first blood that tinged the Tro-  
jan sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter was the  
pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved  
Wife!  
On thee too fondly did my memory  
hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal  
life,—  
The paths which we had trod—these  
fountains, flowers,  
My new-planned cities, and unfinished  
towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to  
cry,  
'Behold they tremble!—haughty their  
array,  
Yet of their number no one dares to  
die?'  
In soul I swept the indignity away:  
Old frailties then recurred:—but lofty  
thought,  
In act embodied, my deliverance  
wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art  
all too weak  
In reason, in self-government too slow;  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek  
Our blest re-union in the shades below.

The invisible world with thee hath sym-  
pathized;  
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to as-  
cend—  
Seeking a higher object. Love was  
given,  
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that  
end;  
For this the passion to excess was  
driven—  
That self might be annulled: her bond-  
age prove  
The fetters of a dream, opposed to  
love."—

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes reap-  
pears!  
Round the dear Shade she would have  
clung—'t is vain:  
The hours are past—too brief had they  
been years;  
And him no mortal effort can detain:  
Swift, toward the realms that know not  
earthly day,  
He through the portal takes his silent  
way,  
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse  
she lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reprov'd,  
She perished: and, as for a wilful crime,  
By the just Gods whom no weak pity  
moved,  
Was doomed to wear out her appointed  
time,  
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather  
flowers  
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due;  
And mortal hopes defeated and o'er-  
thrown  
Are mourned by man, and not by man  
alone,  
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side  
Of Hellespont (such faith was enter-  
tained)

A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
From out the tomb of him for whom she  
died;  
And ever, when such stature they had  
gained  
That Ilium's walls were subject to their  
view,  
The trees' tall summits withered at the  
sight:  
A constant interchange of growth and  
blight!  
1814. 1815.

## YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER, 1814

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquhair, where Hogg had joined us . . . I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear Sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion. (*Wordsworth.*)

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream  
Of which my fancy cherished,  
So faithfully, a waking dream?  
An image that hath perished!  
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,  
To utter notes of gladness,  
And chase this silence from the air,  
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows  
With uncontrolled meanderings;  
Nor have these eyes by greener hills  
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.  
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's  
Lake  
Is visibly delighted;  
For not a feature of those hills  
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,  
Save where that pearly whiteness  
Is round the rising sun diffused,  
A tender hazy brightness;  
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes  
All profitless dejection;  
Though not unwilling here to admit  
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower  
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?  
His bed perchance was yon smooth  
mound  
On which the herd is feeding:  
And haply from this crystal pool,  
Now peaceful as the morning,  
The Water-wraith ascended thrice—  
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings  
The haunts of happy Lovers,  
The path that leads them to the grove,  
The leafy grove that covers:  
And Pity sanctifies the Verse  
That paints, by strength of sorrow,

The unconquerable strength of love;  
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair  
To fond imagination,  
Dost rival in the light of day  
Her delicate creation:  
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,  
A softness still and holy;  
The grace of forest charms decayed,  
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds  
Rich groves of lofty stature,  
With Yarrow winding through the  
pomp  
Of cultivated nature;  
And, rising from those lofty groves,  
Behold a Ruin hoary!  
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,  
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening  
bloom,  
For sportive youth to stray in;  
For manhood to enjoy his strength;  
And age to wear away in!  
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,  
A covert for protection  
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—  
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,  
The wild-wood fruits to gather,  
And on my True-love's forehead plant  
A crest of blooming heather!  
And what if I enwreathed my own!  
'Twere no offence to reason;  
The sober Hills thus deck their brows  
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,  
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;  
A ray of fancy still survives—  
Her sunshine plays upon thee!  
Thy ever-youthful waters keep  
A course of lively pleasure;  
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,  
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the Heights,  
They melt, and soon must vanish;  
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—  
Sad thought, which I would banish,  
But that I know, where'er I go,  
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!  
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,  
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

1814. 1815.

## TO B. R. HAYDON

B. R. Haydon, the painter, was for many years a friend of Wordsworth. On November 27, 1815, Haydon wrote: "I have benefited and have been supported in the troubles of life by your poetry. . . I will bear want, pain, misery, and blindness; but I will never yield one step I have gained on the road I am determined to travel over." Wordsworth's answer to this letter was the following sonnet.

HIGH is our calling, Friend!—Creative  
Art  
(Whether the instrument of words she  
use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,) Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest  
part,  
Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to  
desert.  
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she  
may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure  
distress,  
Still to be strenuous for the bright re-  
ward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-minded-  
ness—  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!  
1815. 1816.

## NOVEMBER 1

How clear, how keen, how marvellously  
bright  
The effluence from yon distant mount-  
ain's head,  
Which, strewn with snow smooth as the  
sky can shed,  
Shines like another sun—on mortal sight  
Uprisen, as if to check approaching  
Night,  
And all her twinkling stars. Who now  
would tread,  
If so he might, yon mountain's glittering  
head—  
Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight  
Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,  
Unswapt, unstained? Nor shall the  
aërial Powers  
Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,  
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely  
pure,  
Through all vicissitudes, till genial  
Spring  
Has filled the laughing vales with wel-  
come flowers. 1815. 1816.

SURPRISED BY JOY—IMPATIENT  
AS THE WIND

This was in fact suggested by my daughter Catherine long after her death. (*Wordsworth.*)

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the  
Wind  
I turned to share the transport—Oh!  
with whom  
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb.  
That spot which no vicissitude can find?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my  
mind—  
But how could I forget thee? Through  
what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss?—That  
thought's return  
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever  
bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was  
no more;  
That neither present time, nor years un-  
born  
Could to my sight that heavenly face  
restore. 1815? 1815.

HAST THOU SEEN, WITH FLASH  
INCESSANT

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,  
Bubbles gliding under ice,  
Bodied forth and evanescent,  
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts!—A wind-swept  
meadow  
Mimicking a troubled sea,  
Such is life; and death a shadow  
From the rock eternity! 1818. 1820.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF  
EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR  
AND BEAUTY

## I

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent,  
Among the speechless clouds, a look  
Of blank astonishment;  
But 'tis endowed with power to stay,  
And sanctify one closing day,  
That frail Mortality may see—  
What is?—ah no, but what can be!  
Time was when field and watery cove

With modulated echoes rang,  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove ;  
Or, crowning, star-like, each some  
sovereign height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth  
below,  
Strains suitable to both.—Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now  
From hill or valley, could not move  
Sublimier transport, purer love,  
Than doth this silent spectacle — the  
gleam—  
The shadow—and the peace supreme !

## II

No sound is uttered,—but a deep  
And solemn harmony pervades  
The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
And penetrates the glades.  
Far-distant images draw nigh,  
Called forth by wondrous potency  
Of beamy radiance, that imbues,  
Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !  
In vision exquisitely clear,  
Herds range along the mountain side ;  
And glistening antlers are descried ;  
And gilded flocks appear.  
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal  
Eve !  
But long as god-like wish, or hope  
divine,  
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe  
That this magnificence is wholly thine !  
—From worlds not quickened by the sun  
A portion of the gift is won ;  
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is  
spread  
On ground which British shepherds  
tread !

## III

And, if there be whom broken ties  
Afflict, or injuries assail,  
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes  
Present a glorious scale,  
Climbing suffused with sunny air,  
To stop—no record hath told where !  
And tempting Fancy to ascend,  
And with immortal Spirits blend !  
—Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;  
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze  
On those bright steps that heavenward  
raise  
Their practicable way.  
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look  
abroad,  
And see to what fair countries ye are  
bound !

And if some traveller, weary of his road,  
Hath slept since noontide on the grassy  
ground,  
Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;  
And wake him with such gentle heed  
As may attune his soul to meet the  
dower  
Bestowed on this transcendent hour !

## IV

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
Were wont to stream before mine eye,  
Where'er it wandered in the morn  
Of blissful infancy.  
This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?  
Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;  
For, if a vestige of those gleams  
Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.  
Dread Power ! whom peace and calm-  
ness serve  
No less than Nature's threatening voice,  
If aught unworthy be my choice,  
From THEE if I would swerve ;  
Oh, let thy grace remind me of the  
light  
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored ;  
Which, at this moment, on my waking  
sight  
Appears to shine, by miracle restored ;  
My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
Rejoices in a second birth !  
—'Tis past, the visionary splendour  
fades ;  
And night approaches with her shades.  
1818. 1820.

## SEPTEMBER, 1819

DEPARTING summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of spring ;  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,  
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,  
Such tribute as to winter chill  
The lonely redbreast pays !  
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,  
From social warblers gathering in  
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer  
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,  
And yellow on the bough :—  
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !  
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed  
Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice;  
Wide is the range, and free the choice  
Of undiscordant themes;  
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize  
Not less than vernal ecstasies,  
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,  
And they like Demi-gods are strong  
On whom the Muses smile;  
But some their function have dis-  
claimed,  
Best pleased with what is aptliest  
framed  
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains  
Committed to the silent plains  
In Britain's earliest dawn:  
Trembled the groves, the stars grew  
pale,  
While all-too-daringly the veil  
Of nature was withdrawn!

Nor such the spirit-stirring note  
When the live chords Alcæus smote,  
Inflamed by sense of wrong;  
Woe! woe to Tyrants! from the lyre  
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire  
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page  
By winged Love inscribed, to assuage  
The pangs of vain pursuit;  
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid  
With finest touch of passion swayed  
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore  
The wreck of Herculean lore,  
What rapture! could ye seize  
Some Theban fragment, or unroll  
One precious, tender-hearted, scroll  
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth  
Of poetry; a bursting forth  
Of genius from the dust:  
What Horace gloried to behold,  
What Maro loved, shall we enfold?  
Can haughty Time be just!  
1819. 1820.

#### AFTER-THOUGHT

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my  
guide,  
As being past away.—Vain sympathies!  
For, backward, Duddon, as I cast my  
eyes,

I see what was, and is, and will abide;  
Still glides the Stream, and shall for  
ever glide:—  
The Form remains, the Function never  
dies;  
While we, the brave, the mighty, and  
the wise,  
We Men, who in our morn of youth de-  
fied  
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!  
Enough, if something from our hands  
have power  
To live, and act, and serve the future  
hour;  
And if, as toward the silent tomb we  
go,  
Through love, through hope, and faith's  
transcendent dower,  
We feel that we are greater than we  
know. 1820 1820.

#### MUTABILITY

FROM low to high doth dissolution  
climb,  
And sink from high to low, along a  
scale  
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not  
fail;  
A musical but melancholy chime,  
Which they can hear who meddle not  
with crime,  
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.  
Truth fails not; but her outward forms  
that bear  
The longest date do melt like frosty  
rime,  
That in the morning whitened hill and  
plain  
And is no more; drop like the tower  
sublime  
Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
His crown of weeds, but could not even  
sustain  
Some casual shout that broke the silent  
air,  
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.  
1821. 1822.

#### INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain ex-  
pense,  
With ill-matched aims the Architect  
who planned—  
Albeit laboring for a scanty band  
Of white-robed Scholars only—this im-  
mense

And glorious Work of fine intelligence!  
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven re-  
     jects the lore  
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;  
 So deemed the man who fashioned for  
     the sense  
 These lofty pillars, spread that branch-  
     ing roof  
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thou-  
     sand cells,  
 Where light and shade repose, where  
     music dwells  
 Linger—*and wandering on as loth to*  
     die;  
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness  
     yieldeth proof  
 That they were born for immortality.  
     1820 or 1821. 1822.

## MEMORY

A PEN—to register; a key—  
 That winds through secret wards;  
 Are well assigned to Memory  
 By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given  
 A Pencil to her hand;  
 That, softening objects, sometimes even  
 Outstrips the heart's demand;

That smooths foregone distress, the  
     lines  
 Of lingering care subdues,  
 Long-vanished happiness refines,  
 And clothes in brighter hues;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works  
 Those Spectres to dilate  
 That startle Conscience, as she lurks  
 Within her lonely seat.

Oh! that our lives, which flee so fast,  
 In purity were such,  
 That not an image of the past  
 Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look  
 Upon a soothing scene,  
 Age steal to his allotted nook  
 Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,  
 In frosty moonlight glistening;  
 Or mountain rivers, where they creep  
 Along a channel smooth and deep,  
 To their own far-off murmurs listening.  
     1823. 1827.

## TO A SKY-LARK

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares  
     abound?  
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart  
     and eye  
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy  
     ground?  
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at  
     will,  
 Those quivering wings composed, that  
     music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady  
     wood;  
 A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world  
     a flood  
 Of harmony, with instinct more di-  
     vine;  
 Type of the wise who soar, but never  
     roam;  
 True to the kindred points of Heaven  
     and Home! 1825. 1827.

## SCORN NOT THE SONNET

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk  
 on the western side of Rydal Lake. (*Wordsworth.*)

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
     frowned,  
 Mindless of its just honors; with this  
     key  
 Shakspeare unlocked his heart; the  
     melody  
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
     wound;  
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso  
     sound;  
 With it Camœns soothed an exile's  
     grief;  
 The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
 Amid the cypress with which Dante  
     crowned  
 His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp.  
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from  
     Faeryland  
 To struggle through dark ways; and,  
     when a damp  
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his  
     hand  
 The Thing became a trumpet; whence  
     he blew  
 Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!  
     1827 ? 1827.

## THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

Written at Rydal Mount. The Rock stands on the right hand a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Graasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. The tuft of primrose has, I fear, been washed away by the heavy rains. (*Wordsworth*)

See Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, April 24th, 1802.

A ROCK there is whose homely front  
The passing traveller slights;  
Yet there the glow-worms hang their  
lamps,

Like stars, at various heights;  
And one coy Primrose to that Rock  
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,  
What kingdoms overthrown,  
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft  
And marked it for my own;  
A lasting link in Nature's chain  
From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,  
Their fellowship renew;  
The stems are faithful to the root,  
That worketh out of view;  
And to the rock the root adheres  
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,  
Though threatening still to fall;  
The earth is constant to her sphere;  
And God upholds them all:  
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads  
Her annual funeral.

\* \* \*

Here closed the meditative strain;  
But air breathed soft that day,  
The hoary mountain-heights were  
cheered,  
The sunny vale looked gay;  
And to the Primrose of the Rock  
I gave this after-lay.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,  
Like Thee, in field and grove  
Revive unenvied;—mightier far,  
Than tremblings that reprove  
Our vernal tendencies to hope,  
Is God's redeeming love;

That love which changed—for woe dis-  
ease,

For sorrow that had bent  
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—  
Their moral element,  
And turned the thistles of a curse  
To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,  
The reasoning Sons of Men,  
From one oblivious winter called  
Shall rise, and breathe again;  
And in eternal summer lose  
Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends  
This prescience from on high,  
The faith that elevates the just,  
Before and when they die;  
And makes each soul a separate heaven,  
A court for Deity. 1831. 1835.

## YARROW REVISITED

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title *Yarrow Revisited* will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream. (*Wordsworth*.)

THE gallant Youth, who may have  
gained,

Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"  
Was but an Infant in the lap  
When first I looked on Yarrow;  
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate  
Long left without a warder,  
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,  
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that  
sweet day,

Their dignity installing  
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves  
Were on the bough, or falling;  
But breezes played, and sunshine  
gleamed—

The forest to embolden;  
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot  
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on  
In foamy agitation;

And slept in many a crystal pool  
For quiet contemplation:  
No public and no private care  
The freeborn mind entralling,  
We made a day of happy hours,  
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of  
youth,

With freaks of graceful folly,—  
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,  
Her Night not melancholy;  
Past, present, future, all appeared  
In harmony united,



Like guests that meet, and some from far,  
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods  
And down the meadow ranging,  
Did meet us with unaltered face,  
Though we were changed and changing;

If, then, some natural shadows spread  
Our inward prospect over,  
The soul's deep valley was not slow  
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,  
And her divine employment!  
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons  
For hope and calm enjoyment;  
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,  
Has o'er their pillow brooded;  
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite  
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change  
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot  
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;  
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot  
For mild Sorrento's breezy waves;  
May classic Fancy, linking  
With native Fancy her fresh aid,  
Preserve thy heart from sinking!

Oh! while they minister to thee,  
Each vying with the other,  
May Health return to mellow Age  
With Strength, her venturous brother;  
And Tiber, and each brook and rill  
Renowned in song and story,  
With unimagined beauty shine,  
Nor lose one ray of glory!

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,  
By tales of love and sorrow,  
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,  
Hast shed the power of Yarrow;  
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,  
Wherever they invite Thee,  
At parent Nature's grateful call,  
With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,  
Such looks of love and honor  
As thy own Yarrow gave to me  
When first I gazed upon her;  
Beheld what I had feared to see,  
Unwilling to surrender  
Dreams treasured up from early days,  
The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all  
That mortals do or suffer,

Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
Memorial tribute offer?  
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?  
Her features, could they win us,  
Unhelped by the poetic voice  
That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localized Romance  
Plays false with our affections;  
Unsanctifies our tears—made sport  
For fanciful dejections:  
Ah, no! the visions of the past  
Sustain the heart in feeling  
Life as she is—our changeful Life,  
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day

In Yarrow's groves were centred;  
Who through the silent portal arch  
Of mouldering Newark entered;  
And clomb the winding stair that once  
Too timidly was mounted  
By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)  
Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!  
Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
Well pleased that future Bards should chant

For simple hearts thy beauty;  
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
Dear to the common sunshine,  
And dearer still, as now I feel,  
To memory's shadowy moonshine!  
1831. 1835.

#### THE TROSACHS.

As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I again saw this beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets that follow were colored by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going. (*Wordsworth.*)

THERE's not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
But were an apt confessional for One  
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,  
That Life is but a tale of morning grass  
Withered at eve. From scenes of art  
Which chase  
That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes  
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more  
Clear than glass

Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice  
happy quest,  
If from a golden perch of aspen spray  
(October's workmanship to rival May)  
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught  
lay,  
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to  
rest! 1831. 1835.

IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY  
LIGHT FROM HEAVEN

If thou indeed derive thy light from  
Heaven,  
Then, to the measure of that heaven-  
born light,  
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content:  
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,  
And they that from the zenith dart their  
beams,  
(Visible though they be to half the earth,  
Though half a sphere be conscious of  
their brightness)  
Are yet of no diviner origin,  
No purer essence, than the one that  
burns,  
Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge  
Of some dark mountain; or than those  
which seem  
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter  
lamps,  
Among the branches of the leafless trees.  
All are the undying offspring of one Sire:  
Then, to the measure of the light vouch-  
safed,  
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be con-  
tent. 1832. 1836.

IF THIS GREAT WORLD OF JOY  
AND PAIN

If this great world of joy and pain  
Revolve in one sure track;  
If freedom, set, will rise again,  
And virtue, flown, come back;  
Woe to the purblind crew who fill  
The heart with each day's care;  
Nor gain, from past or future, skill  
To bear, and to forbear! 1833. 1835.

"THERE!" SAID A STRIPLING,  
POINTING WITH MEET PRIDE

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing  
with meet pride  
Towards a low roof with green trees  
half concealed,

"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very  
field  
Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy."  
Far and wide  
A plain below stretched seaward, while,  
descried  
Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran  
rose;  
And, by that simple notice, the repose  
Of earth, sky, sea and air, was vivified.  
Beneath "the random *bield* of clod or  
stone"  
Myriads of daisies have shone forth in  
flower  
Near the lark's nest, and in their natural  
hour  
Have passed away; less happy than the  
One  
That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died  
to prove  
The tender charm of poetry and love.  
1833. 1835.

MOST SWEET IT IS WITH UN-  
UPLIFTED EYES

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
To pace the ground, if path be there or  
none,  
While a fair region round the traveller  
lies  
Which he forbears again to look upon;  
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
Of meditation, slipping in between  
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
If Thought and Love desert us, from that  
day  
Let us break off all commerce with the  
Muse:  
With Thought and Love companions of  
our way,  
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her  
dews  
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.  
1833. 1835.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE  
DEATH OF JAMES HOGG<sup>1</sup>

WHEN first, descending from the moor-  
lands,  
I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide

<sup>1</sup> Walter Scott . . . . . died Sept. 21, 1832  
S. T. Coleridge . . . . . " July 25, 1834  
Charles Lamb . . . . . " Dec. 27, 1834  
Geo. Crabbe . . . . . " Feb. 3, 1832  
Felicja Hemans . . . . . " May 16, 1834

Along a bare and open valley,  
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered  
Through groves that had begun to shed  
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,  
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,  
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;  
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,  
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,  
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,  
Since every mortal power of Coleridge  
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,  
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in  
earth:  
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,  
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-  
summits,  
Or waves that own no curbing hand,  
How fast has brother followed brother  
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber  
Were earlier raised, remain to hear  
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,  
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with dark-  
ness,  
Like London with its own black wreath,  
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-  
looking.  
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,  
Thou too art gone before; but why,  
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,  
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,  
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;  
For Her who, ere her summer faded,  
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,  
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn  
Maid!  
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,  
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet  
dead. Nov. 1835. Dec. 1835.

#### A POET!—HE HATH PUT HIS HEART TO SCHOOL

*A Poet!*—He hath put his heart to  
school,  
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the  
staff  
Which Art hath lodged within his hand  
—must laugh  
By precept only, and shed tears by rule.  
Thy Art be Nature; the live current  
quaff,  
And let the groveller sip his stagnant  
pool,  
In fear that else, when Critics grave and  
cool  
Have killed him, Scorn should write his  
epitaph.  
How does the Meadow-flower its bloom  
unfold?  
Because the lovely little flower is free  
Down to its root, and, in that freedom,  
bold;  
And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree  
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,  
But from its own divine vitality.  
1842? 1849.

#### SO FAIR, SO SWEET, WITHAL SO SENSITIVE

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,  
Would that the little Flowers were born  
to live,  
Conscious of half the pleasure which  
they give;  
That to this mountain-daisy's self were  
known  
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,  
thrown  
On the smooth surface of this naked  
stone!  
And what if hence a bold desire should  
mount  
High as the Sun, that he could take  
account  
Of all that issues from his glorious  
fount!  
So might he ken how by his sovereign  
aid  
These delicate companionships are  
made;  
And how he rules the pomp of ligh-  
and shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines  
by night  
So privileged, what a countenance of  
delight  
Would through the clouds break forth  
on human sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn  
thine eye  
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,  
Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes  
quelled,  
Be Thou to love and praise alike im-  
pelled  
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.  
1844. 1845.

#### THE UNREMITTING VOICE OF NIGHTLY STREAMS

THE unrelenting voice of nightly  
streams  
That wastes so oft, we think, its tune-  
ful powers,  
If neither soothing to the worm that  
gleams  
Through dewy grass, nor small birds  
hushed in bowers,  
Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy  
flowers,—  
That voice of unpretending harmony  
(For who what is shall measure by what  
seems  
To be, or not to be,  
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)  
Wants not a healing influence that can  
creep

Into the human breast, and mix with  
sleep  
To regulate the motion of our dreams  
For kindly issues—as through every  
clime  
Was felt near murmuring brooks in  
earliest time;  
As at this day, the rudest swains who  
dwell  
Where torrents roar, or hear the tink-  
ling knell  
Of water-breaks, with grateful heart  
could tell.  
1846. 1850.

#### SONNET

##### TO AN OCTOGENARIAN

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time  
brings forth  
No successors; and, lodged in memory,  
If love exist no longer, it must die,—  
Wanting accustomed food, must pass  
from earth,  
Or never hope to reach a second birth.  
This sad belief, the happiest that is left  
To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er  
bereft,  
Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a  
dearth.  
Though poor and destitute of friends  
thou art,  
Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,  
One to whom Heaven assigns that  
mournful part  
The utmost solitude of age to face,  
Still shall be left some corner of the  
heart  
Where Love for living Thing can find a  
place.  
1846. 1850.

# COLERIDGE

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## COLERIDGE

### LIFE

As late I journey'd o'er the extensive  
plain  
Where native Otter sports his scanty  
stream,  
Musing in torpid woe a sister's pain,  
The glorious prospect woke me from  
the dream.

At every step it widen'd to my sight,  
Wood, Meadow, verdant Hill, and dreary  
Steep,  
Following in quick succession of delight,  
Till all—at once—did my eye ravish'd  
sweep!

May this (I cried) my course through  
Life portray!  
New scenes of wisdom may each step  
display,  
And knowledge open as my days ad-  
vance!  
Till what time Death shall pour the un-  
darken'd ray,  
My eye shall dart thro' infinite ex-  
panse,  
And thought suspended lie in rapture's  
blissful trance.

*September, 1789. 1834.<sup>1</sup>*

### LINES

#### ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

O THOU wild Fancy, check thy wing!  
No more  
Those thin white flakes, those purple  
clouds explore!  
Nor there with happy spirits speed thy  
flight

<sup>1</sup> The dates for Coleridge's poems are made up from the Shepherd-Prideaux and the Haney bibliographies, and from the excellent notes to Campbell's edition of the Poetical Works.

Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of  
light;  
Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends  
the day,  
With western peasants hail the morning  
ray!  
Ah! rather bid the perished pleasures  
move,  
A shadowy train, across the soul of  
Love!  
O'er disappointment's wintry desert fling  
Each flower that wreathed the dewy  
locks of Spring,  
When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's  
trim bower  
She leapt, awakened by the pattering  
shower.  
Now sheds the sinking Sun a deeper  
gleam,  
Aid, lovely Sorceress! aid thy Poet's  
dream!  
With faery wand O bid the Maid arise,  
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-  
blue eyes;  
As erst when from the Muses' calm  
abode  
I came, with Learning's meed not un-  
bestowed;  
When as she twined a laurel round my  
brow,  
And met my kiss, and half returned my  
vow,  
O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled  
heart,  
And every nerve confessed the electric  
dart.

O dear Deceit! I see the Maiden rise,  
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-  
blue eyes!  
When first the lark high-soaring swells  
his throat,  
Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the  
loud note,  
I trace her footsteps on the accustomed  
lawn,

I mark her glancing mid the gleams of dawn.

When the bent flower beneath the night-dew weeps

And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,  
Amid the paly radiance soft and sad,  
She meets my lonely path in moonbeams clad.

With her along the streamlet's brink I rove ;

With her I list the warblings of the grove ;

And seems in each low wind her voice to float

Lone whispering Pity in each soothing note !

Spirits of Love ! ye heard her name !  
Obey

The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair.

Whether on clustering pinions ye are there,

Where rich snows blossom on the Myrtle-trees,

Or with fond languishment around my fair

Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair ;

O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,

Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze !

Spirits ! to you the infant Maid was given

Formed by the wondrous Alchemy of Heaven !

No fairer Maid does Love's wide empire know,

No fairer Maid e'er heaved the bosom's snow.

A thousand Loves around her forehead fly ;

A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye ;

Love lights her smile—in Joy's red nectar dips

His myrtle flower, and plants it on her lips.

She speaks ! and hark that passion-warbled song—

Still, Fancy ! still that voice, those notes, prolong,

As sweet as when that voice with rapturous falls

Shall wake the softened echoes of Heaven's Halls !

O (have I sigh'd) were mine the wizard's rod,

Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful God !<sup>1</sup>

A flower-entangled Arbor I would seem  
To shield my Love from Noontide's sultry beam :

Or bloom a Myrtle, from whose odorous boughs

My Love might weave gay garlands for her brows.

When Twilight stole across the fading vale,

To fan my Love I'd be the Evening Gale :

Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest,

And flutter my faint pinions on her breast !

On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by night,

To soothe my Love with shadows of delight :—

Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,  
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes !

As when the Savage, who his drowsy frame

Had basked beneath the Sun's unclouded flame,

Awakes amid the troubles of the air,  
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's glare—

Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep,

And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep :—

So tossed by storms along Life's wildering way,

Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,

When by my native brook I wont to rove,

While Hope with kisses nursed the Infant Love.

Dear native brook ! like Peace, so placidly

Smoothing through fertile fields thy current meek !

Dear native brook ! where first young Poesy

Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream !

Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's cheek,

<sup>1</sup> I entreat the Public's pardon for having carelessly suffered to be printed such intolerable stuff as this and the thirteen following lines. They have not the merit even of originality : as every thought is to be found in the Greek Epigrams (From Coleridge's note in the *Poems*, 1796.)



As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream !  
 Dear native haunts ! where Virtue still  
     is gay,  
 Where Friendship's fixed star sheds a  
     mellowed ray,  
 Where Love a crown of thornless Roses  
     wears,  
 Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her  
     tears ;  
 And Memory, with a Vestal's chaste  
     employ,  
 Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of  
     joy !  
 No more your sky-larks melting from the  
     sight  
 Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with  
     delight—  
 No more shall deck your pensive Pleas-  
     ures sweet  
 With wreaths of sober hue my evening  
     seat.  
 Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied  
     scene  
 Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook  
     between !  
 Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled  
     song,  
 That soars on Morning's wing your vales  
     among.

Scenes of my Hope ! the aching eye ye  
     leave  
 Like yon bright hues that paint the  
     clouds of eve !  
 Tearful and saddening with the saddened  
     blaze  
 Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful  
     gaze :  
 Sees shades on shades with deeper tint  
     impend,  
 Till chill and damp the moonless night  
     descend.                      1793. 1796.

## LEWTI

## OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHANT

At midnight by the stream I roved,  
 To forget the form I loved.  
 Image of Lewti ! from my mind  
 Depart ; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight  
     gleam  
 And the shadow of a star  
 Heaved upon Tamaha's stream :  
 But the rock shone brighter far,  
 The rock half sheltered from my view  
 By pendent boughs of tressy yew.—

So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,  
 Gleaning through her sable hair,  
 Image of Lewti ! from my mind  
 Depart ; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,  
 Onward to the moon it passed ;  
 Still brighter and more bright it grew,  
 With floating colors not a few.  
 Till it reach'd the moon at last :  
 Then the cloud was wholly bright,  
 With a rich and amber light !  
 And so with many a hope I seek  
 And with such joy I find my Lewti ;  
 And even so my pale wan cheek  
 Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty !  
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my  
     mind,  
 If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,  
 Away it goes ; away so soon ?  
 Alas ! it has no power to stay :  
 Its hues are dim, its hues are gray  
 Away it passes from the moon !  
 How mournfully it seems to fly,  
 Ever fading more and more,  
 To joyless regions of the sky—  
 And now 'tis whiter than before !  
 As white as my poor cheek will be,  
 When, Lewti ! on my couch I lie,  
 A dying man for love of thee.  
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my  
     mind—  
 And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapor in the sky.  
 Thin, and white, and very high ;  
 I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :  
 Perhaps the breezes that can fly  
 Now below and now above,  
 Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud  
 Of Lady fair—that died for love.  
 For maids, as well as youths, have  
     perished  
 From fruitless love too fondly cherished.  
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my  
     mind—  
 For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush ! my heedless feet from under  
 Slip the crumbling banks for ever :  
 Like echoes to a distant thunder.  
 They plunge into the gentle river.  
 The river-swans have heard my tread,  
 And startle from their reedy bed.  
 O beauteous birds ! methinks ye measure  
 Your movements to some heavenly  
     tune !

O beauteous birds ! 'tis such a pleasure  
To see you move beneath the moon,  
I would it were your true delight  
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies  
When silent night has closed her eyes :  
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,  
The nightingale sings o'er her head :  
Voice of the Night ! had I the power  
That leafy labyrinth to thread,  
And creep, like thee, with soundless  
tread,  
I then might view her bosom white  
Heaving lovely to my sight,  
As these two swans together heave  
On the gently-swelling wave.

Oh ! that she saw me in a dream,  
And dreamt that I had died for care ;  
All pale and wasted I would seem  
Yet fair withal, as spirits are !  
I'd die indeed, if I might see  
Her bosom heave, and heave for me !  
Soothe, gentle image ! soothe my mind !  
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

1794. April 13, 1798.

#### LA FAYETTE

As when far off the warbled strains are  
heard  
That soar on Morning's wing the vales  
among ;  
Within his cage the imprisoned matin  
bird  
Swells the full chorus with a generous  
song :

He bathes no pinion in the dewy light,  
No Father's joy, no Lover's bliss he  
shares.  
Yet still the rising radiance cheers  
his sight—  
His fellows' freedom soothes the cap-  
tive's cares !

Thou, FAYETTE ! who didst wake with  
startling voice  
Life's better sun from that long win-  
try night,  
Thus in thy Country's triumphs shalt  
rejoice  
And mock with raptures high the dun-  
geon's might :

For lo ! the morning struggles into day,  
And Slavery's spectres shriek and van-  
ish from the ray !

1794. December 15, 1794.

#### REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF RETIREMENT

Sermoni propria.—*non.*

Low was our pretty Cot : our tallest rose  
Peeped at the chamber-window. We  
could hear

At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,  
The sea's faint murmur. In the open  
air

Our myrtles blossom'd ; and across the  
porch

Thick jasmines twined : the little land-  
scape round

Was green and woody, and refreshed  
the eye.

It was a spot which you might aptly  
call

The Valley of Seclusion ! Once I saw  
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)  
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,  
Bristow's citizen : methought, it calmed  
His thirst of idle gold, and made him  
muse

With wiser feelings : for he paused, and  
looked

With a pleased sadness, and gazed all  
around,

Then eyed our Cottage, and gazed round  
again,

And sighed, and said, it was a Blessed  
Place.

And we *were* blessed. Oft with patient  
ear

Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's  
note

(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen  
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered  
tones

I've said to my beloved, " Such, sweet  
girl !

The inobtrusive song of Happiness,  
Unearthly minstrelsy ! then only heard  
When the soul seeks to hear ; when all  
is hushed,

And the heart listens ! "

But the time, when first  
From that low dell, steep up the stony  
mount

I climbed with perilous toil and reached  
the top,

Oh ! what a goodly scene ! *Here* the  
bleak mount,

The bare bleak mountain speckled thin  
with sheep ;

Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the  
sunny fields ;

And river, now with bushy rocks o'er-  
browed.

Now winding bright and full, with naked  
banks ;  
And seats, and lawns, the abbey and the  
wood,  
And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-  
spire ;  
The Channel *there*, the Islands and white  
sails,  
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills and  
shoreless Ocean—  
It seem'd like Omnipresence ! God, me-  
thought,  
Had built him there a Temple : the  
whole World  
Seemed imaged in its vast circumfer-  
ence :  
No *wish* profaned my overwhelmed heart.  
Blest hour ! It was a luxury,—to be !

Ah ! quiet dell ! dear cot, and mount  
sublime !  
I was constrained to quit you. Was it  
right,  
While my unnumbered brethren toiled  
and bled,  
That I should dream away the entrusted  
hours  
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward  
heart  
With feelings all too delicate for use ?  
Sweet is the tear that from some How-  
ard's eye  
Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from  
earth :  
And he that works me good with un-  
moved face,  
Does it but half : he chills me while he  
aids,  
My benefactor, not my brother man !  
Yet even this, this cold beneficence  
Praise, praise it, O my Soul ! oft as thou  
scann'st  
The sluggard Pity's vision-weaving tribe !  
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun  
the wretched.  
Nursing in some delicious solitude  
Their slothful loves and dainty sym-  
pathies !  
I therefore go, and join head, heart, and  
hand,  
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless  
fight  
Of science, freedom, and the truth in  
Christ.

Yet oft when after honorable toil  
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves  
to dream.  
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear Cot !

Thy jasmine and thy window-peeping  
rose,  
And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.  
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet  
abode !  
Ah !—had none greater ! And that all  
had such !  
It might be so—but the time is not yet.  
Speed it, O Father ! Let thy Kingdom  
come ! 1795. October, 1796.

### TIME REAL AND IMAGINARY

#### AN ALLEGORY

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,  
(I knew not where, but 'twas some  
faery place)  
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails out-  
spread,  
Two lovely children run an endless race,  
A sister and a brother !  
This far outstript the other ;  
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,  
And looks and listens for the boy be-  
hind :  
For he, alas ! is blind !  
O'er rough and smooth with even step he  
passed,  
And knows not whether he be first or  
last. 91. . . 1817.

### THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON

ADDRESSED TO CHARLES LAMB, OF THE  
INDIA HOUSE, LONDON

In the June of 1797 some long-expected friends  
paid a visit to the author's cottage : and on the  
morning of their arrival, he met with an acci-  
dent, which disabled him from walking during  
the whole time of their stay. One evening,  
when they had left him for a few hours, he  
composed the following lines in the garden-  
bower. (Coleridge.)

WELL, they are gone, and here must I  
remain,  
This lime-tree bower my prison ! I have  
lost  
Beauties and feelings, such as would  
have been  
Most sweet to my remembrance even  
when age

<sup>1</sup> Included by Coleridge among his " Juvenile  
Poems." There is no other evidence to indicate  
at what date it was written. See, however, a man-  
uscript note of 1811 on the same subject, given  
in *Anima Poetae* at the beginning of Chapter  
VIII.

ed mine eyes to blindness!  
 meanwhile,  
 when I never more may meet  
 On ~~spine~~ heath, along the hill-top  
 edge,  
 Wander in gladness, and wind down,  
 perchance,  
 To that still roaring dell, of which I told;  
 The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow,  
 deep,  
 And only speckled by the mid-day sun;  
 Where its slim trunk the ash from rock  
 to rock  
 Flings arching like a bridge;—that  
 branchless ash,  
 Unsunned and damp, whose few poor  
 yellow leaves  
 Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble  
 still,  
 Fanned by the water-fall! and there my  
 friends  
 Behold the dark green file of long lank  
 weeds,  
 That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)  
 Still nod and drip beneath the dripping  
 edge  
 Of the blue clay-stone.

Now, my friends emerge  
 Beneath the wide wide Heaven—and  
 view again  
 The many-steeped tract magnificent  
 Of hilly fields and meadows, and the  
 sea,  
 With some fair bark, perhaps, whose  
 sails light up  
 The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt  
 two Isles  
 Of purple shadow! Yes! they wander  
 on  
 In gladness all; but thou, methinks,  
 most glad.  
 My gentle-hearted Charles! for thou hast  
 pined  
 And hungered after Nature, many a  
 year.  
 In the great City pent, winning thy way  
 With sad yet patient soul, through evil  
 and pain  
 And strange calamity! Ah! slowly sink  
 Behind the western ridge, thou glorious  
 Sun!  
 Shine in the slant beams of the sinking  
 orb,  
 Ye purple heath-flowers! richer burn,  
 ye clouds!  
 Live in the yellow light, ye distant  
 groves!

And kindle, thou blue Ocean! So my  
 friend  
 Struck with deep joy may stand, as I  
 have stood,  
 Silent with swimming sense; yea, gazing  
 round  
 On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth  
 seem  
 Less gross than bodily; and of such  
 hues  
 As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet  
 he makes  
 Spirits perceive his presence.  
 A delight  
 Comes sudden on my heart, and I am  
 glad  
 As I myself were there! Nor in this  
 bower,  
 This little lime-tree bower, have I not  
 marked  
 Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath  
 the blaze  
 Hung the transparent foliage; and I  
 watched  
 Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to  
 see  
 The shadow of the leaf and stem above,  
 Dappling its sunshine! And that wal-  
 nut-tree  
 Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance  
 lay  
 Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps  
 Those fronting elms, and now, with  
 blackest mass  
 Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter  
 hue  
 Through the late twilight: and though  
 now the bat  
 Wheels silent by, and not a swallow  
 twitters,  
 Yet still the solitary humble-bee  
 Sings in the bean-flower! Henceforth I  
 shall know  
 That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and  
 pure;  
 No plot so narrow, be but Nature there.  
 No waste so vacant, but may well  
 employ  
 Each faculty of sense, and keep the  
 heart  
 Awake to Love and Beauty! and some-  
 times  
 'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,  
 That we may lift the soul, and contem-  
 plate  
 With lively joy the joys we cannot  
 share.  
 My gentle-hearted Charles! when the  
 last rook

Beat its straight path along the dusky  
air  
Homewards, I blest it! deeming, its  
black wing  
(Now a dim speck, now vanishing in  
light)  
Had cross'd the mighty orb's dilated  
glory,  
While thou stood'st gazing; or when all  
was still,  
Flew creaking o'er thy head, and had a  
charm  
For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to  
whom  
No sound is dissonant which tells of  
Life. 1797. 1800.

## KUBLA KHAN

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in Purchas's "Pilgrimage": "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away, like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm  
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair  
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,  
And each mis-shapes the other. Stay awhile,  
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine  
eyes—

The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon  
The visions will return! And lo, he stays,  
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms  
Come trembling back, unite, and now once  
more

The pool becomes a mirror.  
(From *The Picture; or, the Lover's Resolution*.)

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his

mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. *Αἰσιον ἔστιν ἄνω*, but the to-morrow is yet to come. (*Coleridge's note, 1816.*)

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.  
So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round:  
And here were gardens bright with  
sinuous rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing  
tree;  
And here were forests ancient as the  
hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.  
But oh! that deep romantic chasm  
which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn  
cover!  
A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was  
haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless  
turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were  
breathing,  
A mighty fountain momently was  
forced:  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding  
hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's  
flail:  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once  
and ever  
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy  
motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river  
ran,  
Then reached the caverns measureless to  
man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from  
far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled  
measure

From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw :  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win  
me,  
That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them  
there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

1797. 1816.

## SONG FROM OSORIO

HEAR, sweet spirit, hear the spell,  
Lest a blacker charm compel!  
So shall the midnight breezes swell  
With thy deep long-lingering knell.

And at evening evermore,  
In a Chapel on the shore,  
Shall the Chaunters sad and saintly,  
Yellow tapers burning faintly,  
Doleful Masses chaunt for thee,  
*Miserere Domine!*

Hark! the cadence dies away  
On the quiet moonlight sea:  
The boatmen rest their oars and say,  
*Miserere Domine!* 1797. 1813.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT  
MARINER<sup>1</sup>

## IN SEVEN PARTS

*Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interest, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabula, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuetæ hodiernæ vitæ minutis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsadat in*

*pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus. T. BURNET Archæol. Phil. p. 68.*

ARGUMENT<sup>2</sup>

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

## PART I

<sup>2</sup> It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
"By thy long gray beard and glittering  
eye,  
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?  
The Bridegroom's doors are opened  
wide,  
And I am next of kin;  
The guests are met, the feast is set:  
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
"There was a ship," quoth he.  
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard  
loon!"  
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

<sup>3</sup> He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
And listens like a three years' child:  
The Mariner hath his will.

third stanza, for instance, the original text has the two following:

But still he holds the wedding-guest—  
"There was a Ship," quoth he—  
"Nay, if thou'st got a laughsome tale,  
Marinere! come with me."

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
Quoth he, "There was a Ship—"  
"Now get thee hence, thou gray-beard Loon!  
Or my Staff shall make thee skip."

For a full study of the different texts, see Prof. F. H. Sykes' *Select Poems of Coleridge and Wordsworth*, edited from Authors' Editions, Toronto, 1899. On the origin of the poem, see *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. XIV, and Wordsworth's account of it, quoted and discussed in H. D. Traill's *Life of Coleridge*, pp. 47-60.

<sup>1</sup> In the editions of 1798 and 1800 only.

<sup>2</sup> An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one. [This and the following notes, except those in brackets, are Coleridge's running Summary of the story, first printed in *Sybilline Leaves*, 1817.]

<sup>3</sup> The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

<sup>1</sup> The poem is here given in the text of 1839 which is Coleridge's final version, the result of several revisions, most of which are improvements over the first text of 1798. Instead of the

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :  
He cannot choose but hear ;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor  
cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top.

<sup>1</sup> The sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the sea came he !  
And he shone bright, and on the right  
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon—  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon.

<sup>2</sup> The bride hath paced into the hall,  
Red as a rose is she ;  
Nodding their heads before her goes  
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.

<sup>3</sup> "And now the Storm-blast came, and  
he  
Was tyrannous and strong :  
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roared the  
blast,  
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and  
snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold :  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald.

<sup>1</sup> The Mariner tells how the ship sailed south-  
ward with a good wind and fair weather, till it  
reached the line.

<sup>2</sup> The Wedding Guest heareth the bridal  
music ; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

<sup>3</sup> The ship drawn by a storm toward the south  
pole.

<sup>4</sup> The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where  
no living thing was to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen :  
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—  
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around :  
It cracked and growled, and roared and  
howled,  
Like voices in a swoond !

<sup>1</sup> At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the fog it came ;  
As if it had been a Christian soul,  
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
And round and round it flew.  
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;  
The helmsman steered us through !

<sup>2</sup> And a good south wind sprung up be-  
hind ;  
The Albatross did follow,  
And every day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariner's hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,  
It perched for vespers nine ;  
While all the night, through fog-smoke  
white,  
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

<sup>3</sup> "God save thee, ancient Mariner !  
From the fiends, that plague thee  
thus !—  
Why look'st thou so ?" — "With my  
cross-bow  
I shot the Albatross.

#### PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right :  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left  
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew be-  
hind,  
But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day for food or play  
Came to the mariners' hollo !

<sup>1</sup> Till a great sea bird, called the Albatross,  
came through the snow-fog, and was received  
with great joy and hospitality.

<sup>2</sup> And lo ! the Albatross proveth a bird of good  
omen, and followeth the ship as it returned  
northward through fog and floating ice.

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the  
pious bird of good omen.

<sup>1</sup> And I had done an hellish thing,  
And it would work 'em woe :  
For all averred, I had killed the bird,  
That made the breeze to blow.  
Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow !

<sup>2</sup> Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist :  
Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to  
slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.

<sup>3</sup> The fair breeze blew, the white foam  
flew,  
The furrow followed free ;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

<sup>4</sup> Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt  
down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be ;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

<sup>5</sup> Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink ;  
Water, water, everywhere  
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !  
That ever this should be !  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night ;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green, and blue and white.

<sup>1</sup> His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

<sup>2</sup> But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

<sup>3</sup> The fair breeze continues ; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

<sup>4</sup> The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

<sup>5</sup> And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

<sup>1</sup> And some in dreams assured were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so ;  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter  
drought,  
Was withered at the root ;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

<sup>2</sup> Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young !  
Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.

## PART III

"There passed a weary time. Each  
throat  
Was parched, and glazed each eye.  
A weary time ! a weary time !  
How glazed each weary eye !—  
<sup>3</sup> When looking westward, I beheld  
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,  
And then it seemed a mist ;  
It moved and moved, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !  
And still it neared and neared :  
As if it dodged a water-sprite.  
It plunged and tacked and veered.

<sup>4</sup> With throats unslaked, with black lips  
baked,  
We could nor laugh nor wail ;  
Through utter drought all dumb we  
stood !  
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,  
And cried, A sail ! a sail !

With throats unslaked, with black lips  
baked,  
Agape they heard me call :

<sup>1</sup> A Spirit had followed them ; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

<sup>2</sup> The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner : in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

<sup>4</sup> At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship ; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.



<sup>1</sup> Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they were drinking all.

<sup>2</sup> 'See ! see !' (I cried) 'she tacks no  
more !  
Hither to work us weal,  
Without a breeze, without a tide,  
She steadies with upright keel !'

The western wave was all aflame.  
The day was well-nigh done !  
Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad bright Sun ;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.

<sup>3</sup> And straight the Sun was flecked with  
bars,  
(Heaven's Mother send us grace !)  
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered  
With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat  
loud)  
How fast she nears and nears !  
Are those her sails that glance in the  
Sun,  
Like restless gossameres ?

<sup>4</sup> Are those her ribs though which the Sun  
Did peer, as through a grate ?  
And is that Woman all her crew ?  
Is that a Death ? and are there two ?  
<sup>5</sup> Is Death that woman's mate ?

<sup>6</sup> Her lips were red, her looks were free,  
Her locks were yellow as gold :  
Her skin was as white as leprosy,  
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,  
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

<sup>7</sup> The naked hulk alongside came,  
And the twain were casting dice ;  
'The game is done ! I've won ! I've won !'  
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

<sup>1</sup> A flash of joy.

<sup>2</sup> And horror follows. For can it be a ship that  
comes onward without wind or tide ?

<sup>3</sup> It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

<sup>4</sup> And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of  
the setting Sun.

<sup>5</sup> The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate,  
and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

<sup>6</sup> Like vessel, like crew !

<sup>7</sup> Death and Life-in-Death have dined for the  
ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the  
ancient Mariner.

<sup>1</sup> The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out.  
At one stride comes the dark ;  
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
Off shot the spectre-bark.

<sup>2</sup> We listened and looked sideways up !  
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
My life-blood seemed to sip !  
The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
The steersman's face by his lamp  
gleamed white ;  
From the sails the dew did drip—  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.

<sup>3</sup> One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,  
Too quick for groan or sigh.  
Each turned his face with a ghastly  
pang,  
And cursed me with his eye.

<sup>4</sup> Four times fifty living men,  
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
They dropped down one by one.

<sup>5</sup> The souls did from their bodies fly,—  
They fled to bliss or woe !  
And every soul, it passed me by,  
Like the whizz of my cross-bow !”—

#### PART IV

<sup>6</sup> "I fear thee, ancient Mariner !  
I fear thy skinny hand  
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
As is the ribbed sea-sand."<sup>7</sup>

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,  
And thy skinny hand, so brown."—  
<sup>8</sup> "Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-  
Guest !  
This body dropt not down.

<sup>1</sup> No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

<sup>2</sup> At the rising of the Moon,

<sup>3</sup> One after another

<sup>4</sup> His shipmates drop down dead.

<sup>5</sup> But Life-in-Death begins her work on the  
ancient Mariner.

<sup>6</sup> The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is  
talking to him.

<sup>7</sup> [For the last two lines of this stanza, I am in-  
debted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delight-  
ful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with  
him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that  
this poem was planned, and in part composed.  
(Note of Coleridge, first printed in *Sibylline  
Leaves*, 1817) ]

<sup>8</sup> But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his  
bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible  
penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
Alone on a wide wide sea!  
And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony.

<sup>1</sup> The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie;  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I.

<sup>2</sup> I looked upon the rotting sea,  
And drew my eyes away;  
I looked upon the rotting deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;  
But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
A wicked whisper came, and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
And the balls like pulses beat;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and  
the sky  
Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.

<sup>3</sup> The cold sweat melted from their  
limbs,  
Nor rot nor reek did they:  
The look with which they looked on me  
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
A spirit from on high;  
But oh! more horrible than that  
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!  
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that  
curse,  
And yet I could not die.

<sup>4</sup> The moving Moon went up the sky,  
And nowhere did abide:  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside—

<sup>1</sup> He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

<sup>2</sup> And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

<sup>3</sup> But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

<sup>4</sup> In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,  
Like April hoar-frost spread;  
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
The charmed water burnt alway  
A still and awful red.

<sup>1</sup> Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes:  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship  
I watched their rich attire:  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire.

<sup>2</sup> O happy livings things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:  
A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
<sup>3</sup> And I blessed them unaware:  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

<sup>4</sup> The selfsame moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.

#### PART V

"Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole!  
To Mary Queen the praise be given!  
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
That slid into my soul.

<sup>1</sup> The silly buckets on the deck,  
That had so long remained,  
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;  
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
My garments all were dank;  
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:  
I was so light—almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessed ghost.

<sup>1</sup> By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

<sup>2</sup> Their beauty and their happiness.

<sup>3</sup> He blesseth them in his heart.

<sup>4</sup> The spell begins to break.

<sup>5</sup> By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

<sup>1</sup> And soon I heard a roaring wind :  
It did not come anear :  
But with its sound it shook the sails,  
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !  
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
To and fro they were hurried about !  
And to and fro, and in and out,  
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more  
loud,  
And the sails did sigh like sedge ;  
And the rain poured down from one  
black cloud ;  
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
The Moon was at its side :  
Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag,  
A river steep and wide.

<sup>2</sup> The loud wind never reached the  
ship,  
Yet now the ship moved on !  
Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all up-  
rose,  
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;  
It had been strange, even in a dream,  
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved  
on ;  
Yet never a breeze up blew :  
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
Where they were wont to do :  
They raised their limbs like lifeless  
tools—  
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me, knee to knee :  
The body and I pulled at one rope  
But he said nought to me."—

<sup>3</sup> " I fear thee, ancient Mariner !"—  
" Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !

<sup>1</sup> He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights  
and commotions in the sky and the element.

<sup>2</sup> The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired,  
and the ship moves on ;

<sup>3</sup> But not by the souls of the men, nor by  
demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed  
troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invo-  
cation of the guardian saint.

'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
Which to their corpses came again,  
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their  
arms,  
And clustered round the mast ;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their  
mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun ;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing ;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute ;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe :  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,  
Moved onward from beneath.

<sup>1</sup> Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid : and it was he  
That made the ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fixed her to the ocean :  
But in a minute she 'gan stir,  
With a short uneasy motion—  
Backwards and forwards half her length  
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound :  
It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.

<sup>1</sup> The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole  
carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedi-  
ence to the angelic troop, but still requir-  
eth vengeance.

<sup>1</sup> How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare;  
But ere my living life returned,  
I heard and in my soul discerned  
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?  
By him who died on cross,  
With his cruel bow he laid full low  
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself  
In the land of mist and snow,  
He loved the bird that loved the man  
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew:  
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance  
done,  
And penance more will do.'

## PART VI

## FIRST VOICE

"But tell me, tell me! speak again,  
Thy soft response renewing—  
What makes that ship drive on so fast?  
What is the ocean doing?

## SECOND VOICE

'Still as a slave before his lord,  
The ocean hath no blast;  
His great bright eye most silently  
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;  
For she guides him smooth or grim.  
See, brother, see! how graciously  
She looketh down on him.'

## FIRST VOICE

<sup>2</sup> But why drives on that ship so fast,  
Without or wave or wind?'

## SECOND VOICE

'The air is cut away before,  
And closes from behind.

<sup>1</sup> The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wroeg; and two of them relate one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

<sup>2</sup> The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
Or we shall be belated:  
For slow and slow that ship will go,  
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

<sup>1</sup> I woke, and we were sailing on  
As in a gentle weather:  
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was  
high,  
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:  
All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they  
died,  
Had never passed away:  
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,  
Nor turn them up to pray.

<sup>2</sup> And now this spell was snapt: once  
more  
I viewed the ocean green,  
And looked far forth, yet little saw  
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round walks  
on,  
And turns no more his head;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made:  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
Yet she sailed softly too:  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.

<sup>3</sup> Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed  
The light-house top I see?  
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?  
Is this mine own countree?

<sup>1</sup> The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

<sup>2</sup> The curse is finally expiated.

<sup>3</sup> And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray—  
'O let me be awake, my God!  
Or let me sleep alway.'

The harbor-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn!  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
That stands above the rock:  
The moonlight steeped in silentness  
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light  
Till rising from the same,  
Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
In crimson colors came.

<sup>2</sup> A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were:  
I turned my eyes upon the deck—  
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
And, by the holy rood!  
A man all light, a seraph-man,  
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
It was a heavenly sight!  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
No voice did they impart—  
No voice; but oh! the silence sank  
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,  
I heard the Pilot's cheer;  
My head was turned perforce away,  
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
I heard them coming fast:  
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy  
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:  
It is the Hermit good!  
He singeth loud his godly hymns  
That he makes in the wood.  
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away  
The Albatross's blood.

<sup>1</sup> The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,  
<sup>2</sup> And appear in their own forms of light.

## PART VII

<sup>1</sup> "This Hermit good lives in that wood  
Which slopes down to the sea.  
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!  
He loves to talk with mariners  
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—  
He hath a cushion plump:  
It is the moss that wholly hides  
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard then  
talk,  
'Why, this is strange, I trow!  
Where are those lights so many and  
fair,  
That signal made but now?'

<sup>2</sup> 'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit  
said—

'And they answered not our cheer!  
The planks look warped! and see those  
sails,

How thin they are and sere!  
I never saw aught like to them,  
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
My forest-brook along;  
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,  
And the owl whoops to the wolf below  
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look'—  
(The Pilot made reply)  
'I am a-feared.'—'Push on, push on!'  
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,  
But I nor spake nor stirred;  
The boat came close beneath the ship,  
And straight a sound was heard.

<sup>3</sup> Under the water it rumbled on,  
Still louder and more dread:  
It reached the ship, it split the bay;  
The ship went down like lead.

<sup>4</sup> Stunned by that loud and dreadful  
sound,  
Which sky and ocean smote,

<sup>1</sup> The Hermit of the Wood,

<sup>2</sup> Approacheth the ship with wonder.

<sup>3</sup> The ship suddenly sinketh.

<sup>4</sup> The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's  
boat.

Like one that hath been seven days  
drowned  
My body lay afloat ;  
But swift as dreams, myself I found  
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,  
The boat spun round and round ;  
And all was still, save that the hill  
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked  
And fell down in a fit ;  
The Holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : The Pilot's boy  
Who now doth crazy go  
Laughed loud and long, and all the while  
His eyes went to and fro.  
'Ha ! ha !' quoth he, 'full plain I see,  
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,  
I stood on the firm land !  
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.

<sup>1</sup> O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !  
The Hermit crossed his brow.  
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—  
What manner of man art thou ?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was  
wrenched  
With a woful agony,  
Which forced me to begin my tale ;  
And then it left me free.

<sup>2</sup> Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
That agony returns :  
And till my ghastly tale is told,  
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;  
I have strange power of speech ;  
That moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me :  
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door !  
The wedding-guests are there :  
But in the garden-bower the bride  
And bride-maids singing are :  
And hark the little vespers bell,  
Which biddeth me to prayer !

<sup>1</sup> The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him ; and the penance of life falls on him.

<sup>2</sup> And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land.

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been  
Alone on a wide wide sea :  
So lonely, 'twas, that God himself  
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
'Tis sweeter far to me,  
To walk together to the kirk,  
With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk,  
And all together pray,  
While each to his great Father bends,  
Old men, and babes, and loving friends  
And youths and maidens gay !

<sup>1</sup> Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small ;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone ; and now the Wedding-Guest  
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been  
stunned,  
And is of sense forlorn :  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn.

1797-1798. 1798.

### CHRISTABEL

The first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision ; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year.

I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle : namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found

<sup>1</sup> And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion. (From Coleridge's *Preface* to the first edition.)

## PART THE FIRST

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock,  
Tu—whit!—Tu—whoo!  
And hark, again! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff, which  
From her kennel beneath the rock  
Maketh answer to the clock,  
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;  
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?  
The night is chilly, but not dark.  
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.  
The night is chill, the cloud is gray;  
'Tis a month before the month of May.  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the woods so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothed knight;  
And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke.  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak  
But moss and rarest mistletoe:  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,  
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
The lovely lady, Christabel!  
It moaned as near, as near can be,  
But what it is she cannot tell.—  
On the other side it seems to be,  
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?  
There is not wind enough in the air  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady's cheek—  
There is not wind enough to twirl  
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can,  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!  
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
And stole to the other side of the oak.  
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,  
Drest in a silken robe of white,  
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:  
The neck that made the white robe wan,  
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;  
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair.  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see  
A lady so richly clad as she—  
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary mother, save me now!  
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou?

The lady strange made answer meet,  
And her voice was faint and sweet:—  
Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness:  
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!  
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?  
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet:

My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine:  
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:  
They choked my cries with force and fright,  
And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,  
And they rode furiously behind.  
They spurred amain, their steeds were white:  
And once we crossed the shade of night,  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be;  
Nor do I know how long it is

(For I have lain entranced I wis)  
 Since one, the tallest of the five,  
 Took me from the palfrey's back,  
 A weary woman, scarce alive.  
 Some muttered words his comrades  
 spoke :

He placed me underneath this oak ;  
 He swore they would return with haste ;  
 Whither they went I cannot tell—  
 I thought I heard, some minutes past,  
 Sounds as of a castle bell.  
 Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),  
 And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her  
 hand,  
 And comforted fair Geraldine :  
 O well, bright dame ! may you command  
 The service of Sir Leoline ;  
 And gladly our stout chivalry  
 Will he send forth and friends withal  
 To guide and guard you safe and free  
 Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they  
 passed  
 That strove to be, and were not, fast.  
 Her gracious stars the lady blest,  
 And thus spake on sweet Christabel :  
 All our household are at rest  
 The hall as silent as the cell ;  
 Sir Leoline is weak in health,  
 And may not well awakened be,  
 But we will move as if in stealth,  
 And I beseech your courtesies,  
 This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel  
 Took the key that fitted well ;  
 A little door she opened straight,  
 All in the middle of the gate ;  
 The gate that was ironed within and  
 without,

Where an army in battle array had  
 marched out.

The lady sank, belike through pain,  
 And Christabel with might and main  
 • Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
 Over the threshold of the gate :  
 Then the lady rose again,  
 And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,  
 They crossed the court ; right glad they  
 were.

And Christabel devoutly cried  
 To the lady by her side,  
 Praise we the Virgin all divine  
 Who hath rescued thee from thy dis-  
 tress !

Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,  
 I cannot speak for weariness.  
 So free from danger, free from fear,  
 They crossed the court : right glad they  
 were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old  
 Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
 The mastiff old did not awake,  
 Yet she an angry moan did make !  
 And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?  
 Never till now she uttered yell  
 Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
 Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :  
 For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
 Pass as lightly as you will !  
 The brands were flat, the brands were  
 dying,  
 Amid their own white ashes lying ;  
 But when the lady passed, there came  
 A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;  
 And Christabel saw the lady's eye,  
 And nothing else saw she thereby,  
 Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline  
 tall,  
 Which hung in a murky old niche in the  
 wall.

O softly tread, said Christabel,  
 My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,  
 And jealous of the listening air  
 They steal their way from stair to stair  
 Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
 And now they pass the Baron's room,  
 As still as death, with stifled breath !  
 And now have reached her chamber  
 door ;  
 And now doth Geraldine press down  
 The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,  
 And not a moonbeam enters here.  
 But they without its light can see  
 The chamber carved so curiously,  
 Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
 All made out of the carver's brain,  
 For a lady's chamber meet ;  
 The lamp with twofold silver chain  
 Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;  
 But Christabel the lamp will trim.  
 She trimmed the lamp, and made it  
 bright,  
 And left it swinging to and fro,  
 While Geraldine, in wretched plight,  
 Sank down upon the floor below.



O weary lady, Geraldine,  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!  
It is a wine of virtuous powers;  
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn?  
Christabel answered—Woe is me!  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle-bell  
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.  
O mother dear! that thou wert here!  
I would, said Geraldine, she were!

But soon with altered voice, said she—  
“Off, wandering mother! Peak and  
pine!

I have power to bid thee flee.”  
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?  
Why stares she with unsettled eye?  
Can she the bodiless dead espy?  
And why with hollow voice cries she,  
“Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,  
Off, woman, off! ’tis given to me.”

Then Christabel knelt by the lady’s side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—  
“Alas!” said she, “this ghastly ride—  
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!”  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,  
And faintly said, “’tis over now!”

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:  
Her fair large eyes ’gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright:  
She was most beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—  
“All they who live in the upper sky,  
Do love you, holy Christabel!  
And you love them, and for their sake  
And for the good which me befel,  
Even I in my degree will try,  
Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
But now unrobe yourself; for I  
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.”

Quoth Christabel, So let it be!  
And as the lady bade, did she.  
Her gentle limbs did she undress,  
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe  
So many thoughts moved to and fro,

That vain it were her lids to close;  
So half-way from the bed she rose,  
And on her elbow did recline  
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,  
And slowly rolled her eyes around;  
Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
The cincture from beneath her breast:  
Her silken robe, and inner vest,  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,  
Behold! her bosom and half her  
side—

A sight to dream of, not to tell!  
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;  
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!  
Deep from within she seems half-way  
To lift some weight with sick assay,  
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;  
Then suddenly, as one defied,  
Collects herself in scorn and pride,  
And lay down by the Maiden’s side!—  
And in her arms the maid she took,

Ah wel-a-day!  
And with low voice and doleful look  
These words did say:  
“In the touch of this bosom there  
worketh a spell,  
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christa-  
bel!

Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know  
to-morrow,

This mark of my shame, this seal of my  
sorrow;

But vainly thou warrest,

For this is alone in

Thy power to declare,

That in the dim forest

Thou heard’st a low moaning.

And found’st a bright lady, surpassingly  
fair;

And didst bring her home with thee in  
love and in charity.

To shield her and shelter her from the  
damp air.”

#### THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST

It was a lovely sight to see  
The lady Christabel, when she  
Was praying at the old oak tree.  
Amid the jagged shadows  
Of mossy leafless boughs,  
Kneeling in the moonlight,  
To make her gentle vows;

Her slender palms together prest,  
Heaving sometimes on her breast;  
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—  
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,  
And both blue eyes more bright than  
clear,  
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)  
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,  
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,  
Dreaming that alone, which is—  
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she.  
The lady, who knelt at the old oak  
tree?

And lo! the worker of these harms,  
That holds the maiden in her arms,  
Seems to slumber still and mild,  
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
O Geraldine! since arms of thine  
Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
O Geraldine! one hour was thine—  
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and  
rill,  
The night-birds all that hour were still,  
But now they are jubilant anew,  
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—  
whoo!  
Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and  
fell!

And see! the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance;  
Her limbs relax, her countenance  
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin  
lids  
Close o'er her eyes! and tears she sheds—  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!  
And oft the while she seems to smile  
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth  
weep.  
Like a youthful hermitess,  
Beauteous in a wilderness,  
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
And, if she move unquietly,  
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free  
Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.  
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,  
What if she knew her mother near?  
But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
That saints will aid if men will call:  
For the blue sky bends over all!

1797. 1816.

PART THE SECOND

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,  
Knells us back to a world of death.  
These words Sir Leoline first said,  
When he rose and found his lady dead:  
These words Sir Leoline will say  
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began  
That still at dawn the sacristan,  
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,  
Five and forty beads must tell  
Between each stroke—a warning knell,  
Which not a soul can choose but hear  
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!  
And let the drowsy sacristan  
Still count as slowly as he can!  
There is no lack of such, I ween,  
As well fill up the space between.  
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,  
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,  
With ropes of rock and bells of air  
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,  
Who all give back, one after t'other,  
The death-note to their living brother;  
And oft too, by the knell offended,  
Just as their one! two! three! is ended  
The devil mocks the doleful tale  
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud  
That merry peal comes ringing loud;  
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,  
And rises lightly from the bed;  
Puts on her silken vestments white,  
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,  
And nothing doubting of her spell  
Awakens the lady Christabel.  
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?  
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied  
The same who lay down by her side—  
O rather say, the same whom she  
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!  
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!  
For she belike hath drunken deep  
Of all the blessedness of sleep!  
And while she spake, her looks, her air,  
Such gentle thankfulness declare,  
That (so it seemed) her girded vests  
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.  
"Sure I have sinn'd!" said Christabel,  
"Now heaven be praised if all be well!"  
And in long faltering tones, yet sweet,  
Did she the lofty lady greet

With such perplexity of mind  
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed  
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed  
That He, who on the cross did groan,  
Might wash away her sins unknown,  
She forthwith led fair Geraldine  
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall  
Are pacing both into the hall,  
And pacing on through page and groom,  
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest  
His gentle daughter to his breast,  
With cheerful wonder in his eyes  
The lady Geraldine espies,  
And gave such welcome to the same,  
As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,  
And when she told her father's name,  
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,  
Murmuring o'er the name again,  
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;  
But whispering tongues can poison  
truth ;

And constancy lives in realms above ;  
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;  
And to be wroth with one we love  
Doth work like madness in the brain.  
And thus it chanced, as I divine,  
With Roland and Sir Leoline.  
Each spake words of high disdain  
And insult to his heart's best brother :  
They parted—ne'er to meet again !  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from pain—  
ing—

They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;  
A dreary sea now flows between.  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,  
Stood gazing on the damsel's face ;  
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine  
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,  
His noble heart swelled high with rage ;  
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side  
He would proclaim it far and wide,

With trump and solemn heraldry,  
That they, who thus had wronged the  
dame

Were base as spotted infamy !  
“ And if they dare deny the same,  
My herald shall appoint a week,  
And let the recreant traitors seek  
My tourney court—that there and then  
I may dislodge their reptile souls  
From the bodies and forms of men ! ”  
He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !  
For the lady was ruthlessly seized ; and  
he kenned  
In the beautiful lady the child of his  
friend !

And now the tears were on his face,  
And fondly in his arms he took  
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,  
Prolonging it with joyous look.  
Which when she viewed, a vision fell  
Upon the soul of Christabel,  
The vision of fear, the touch and pain !  
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw  
again—

(Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee,  
Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see ?)  
Again she saw that bosom old,  
Again she felt that bosom cold,  
And drew in her breath with a hissing  
sound :

Whereat the Knight turned wildly  
round,  
And nothing saw, but his own sweet  
maid

With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,  
And in its stead that vision blest,  
Which comforted her after-rest,  
While in the lady's arms she lay,  
Had put a rapture in her breast,  
And on her lips and o'er her eyes  
Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,  
“ What ails then my beloved child ? ”  
The Baron said.—His daughter mild  
Made answer, “ All will yet be well ! ”  
I ween, she had no power to tell  
Aught else : so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,  
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.  
Such sorrow with such grace she  
blended,

As if she feared she had offended  
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid !  
And with such lowly tones she prayed  
She might be sent without delay

Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!

Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.

"Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!

Go thou, with music sweet and loud,  
And take two steeds with trappings proud,

And take the youth whom thou lov'st best  
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,  
And clothe you both in solemn vest,  
And over the mountains haste along,  
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,  
Detain you on the valley road.

"And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,

My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes  
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,

And reaches soon that castle good  
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,

Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,

More loud than your horses' echoing feet!  
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,  
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!  
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—  
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.

He bids thee come without delay

With all thy numerous array;

and take thy lovely daughter home:

And he will meet thee on the way

With all his numerous array

White with their panting palfreys' foam:

And, by mine honor! I will say,

That I repent me of the day

When I spake words of fierce disdain

To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine!—

—For since that evil hour hath flown,

Many a summer's sun hath shone;

Yet ne'er found I a friend again

Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,

Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;

And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,

His gracious hail on all bestowing;

"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,

Are sweeter than my harp can tell;

Yet might I gain a boon of thee,

This day my journey should not be,

So strange a dream hath come to me:

That I had vowed with music loud

To clear yon wood from thing unblest,

Warn'd by a vision in my rest!

For in my sleep I saw that dove,  
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,  
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—

Sir Leoline! I saw the same,  
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,  
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.

Which when I saw and when I heard,  
I wonder'd what might ail the bird;  
For nothing near it could I see,  
Save the grass and green herbs under-  
neath the old tree.

"And in my dream, methought, I went  
To search out what might there be found;  
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,  
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.

I went and peered, and could descry  
No cause for her distressful cry;

But yet for her dear lady's sake

I stooped, methought, the dove to take,

When lo! I saw a bright green snake

Coiled around its wings and neck.

Green as the herbs on which it couched,

Close by the dove's its head it crouched:

And with the dove it heaves and stirs,

Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!

I woke; it was the midnight hour,

The clock was echoing in the tower;

But though my slumber was gone by,

This dream it would not pass away—

It seems to live upon my eye!

And thence I vowed this self-same day

With music strong and saintly song

To wander through the forest bare,

Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,

Half-listening heard him with a smile;

Then turned to Lady Geraldine,

His eyes made up of wonder and love;

And said in courtly accents fine,

"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous

dove,

With arms more strong than harp of

song,

Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"

He kissed her forehead as he spake,

And Geraldine in maiden wise

Casting down her large bright eyes,

With blushing cheek and courtesy fine

She turned her from Sir Leoline;

Softly gathering up her train,

That o'er her right arm fell again;

And folded her arms across her chest,

And couched her head upon her breast,

And looked askance at Christabel—

Jesu, Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,  
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,

Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,  
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread,

At Christabel she look'd askance !—  
One moment—and the sight was fled !  
But Christabel in dizzy trance  
Stumbling on the unsteady ground  
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound ;  
And Geraldine again turned round,  
And like a thing, that sought relief,  
Full of wonder and full of grief,  
She rolled her large bright eyes divine  
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas ! her thoughts are gone,  
She nothing sees—no sight but one !  
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,  
I know not how, in fearful wise,  
So deeply had she drunken in  
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,  
That all her features were resigned  
To this sole image in her mind :  
And passively did imitate  
That look of dull and treacherous hate !  
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,  
Still picturing that look askance  
With forced unconscious sympathy  
Full before her father's view—  
As far as such a look could be  
In eyes so innocent and blue !

And when the trance was o'er, the maid  
Paused awhile, and inly prayed :  
Then falling at the Baron's feet,  
" By my mother's soul do I entreat  
That thou this woman send away ! "  
She said : and more she could not say :  
For what she knew she could not tell,  
O'er mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,  
Sir Leoline ? Thy only child  
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,  
So fair, so innocent, so mild ;  
The same, for whom thy lady died !  
O, by the pangs of her dear mother,  
Think thou no evil of thy child !  
For her, and thee, and for no other,  
She prayed the moment ere she died :  
Prayed that the babe for whom she died  
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride !

That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,  
Sir Leoline !  
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,  
Her child and thine ?

Within the Baron's heart and brain  
If thoughts, like these, had any share,  
They only swelled his rage and pain,  
And did but work confusion there.  
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,  
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,

Dishonor'd thus in his old age ;  
Dishonor'd by his only child,  
And all his hospitality  
To the insulted daughter of his friend  
By more than woman's jealousy  
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—  
He rolled his eye with stern regard  
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,  
And said in tones abrupt, austere—  
" Why, Bracy ! dost thou loiter here ?  
I bade thee hence ! " The bard obeyed ;  
And turning from his own sweet maid,  
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,  
Led forth the lady Geraldine !

1800. 1816.

#### THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND

A little child, a limber elf,  
Singing, dancing to itself,  
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,  
That always finds, and never seeks,  
Makes such a vision to the sight  
As fills a father's eyes with light :  
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast  
Upon his heart, that he at last  
Must needs express his love's excess  
With words of unmeant bitterness.  
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together  
Thoughts so all unlike each other ;  
To mutter and mock a broken charm,  
To dally with wrong that does no harm.  
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty  
At each wild word to feel within  
A sweet recoil of love and pity.  
And what, if in a world of sin  
(O sorrow and shame should this be true !)

Such giddiness of heart and brain  
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,  
So talks as it's most used to do.

1801. 1816.

#### FRANCE: AN ODE

##### I

YE Clouds ! that far above me float and pause,  
Whose pathless march no mortal may control !  
Ye Ocean Waves ! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,

Yield homage only to eternal laws!  
 Ye Woods! that listen to the night-  
   bird's singing,  
   Midway the smooth and perilous slope  
   reclined,  
 Save when your own imperious branches  
   swinging,  
   Have made a solemn music of the  
   wind!  
 Where, like a man beloved of God,  
 Through glooms, which never woodman  
   trod,  
   How oft, pursuing fancies holy,  
 My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds  
   I wound,  
   Inspired beyond the guess of folly,  
 By each rude shape and wild unconquer-  
   able sound!  
 O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests  
   high!  
   And O ye Clouds that far above me  
   soared!  
 Thou rising sun! thou blue rejoicing  
   Sky!  
 Yea, every thing that is and will be  
   free!  
 Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye  
   be,  
 With what deep worship I have still  
   adored  
   The spirit of divinest Liberty.

## II

When France in wrath her giant-limbs  
   upreared,  
   And with that oath which smote air,  
   earth and sea,  
   Stamped her strong foot and said she  
   would be free,  
 Bear witness for me, how I hoped and  
   feared!  
 With what a joy my lofty gratulation  
   Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:  
 And when to whelm the disenchanted  
   nation,  
   Like fiends embattled by a wizard's  
   wand,  
   The Monarchs marched in evil day,  
   And Britain join'd the dire array;  
   Though dear her shores and circling  
   ocean,  
 Though many friendships, many youth-  
   ful loves  
   Had swoln the patriot emotion  
 And flung a magic light o'er all her hills  
   and groves;  
 Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang  
   defeat

To all that braved the tyrant-quelling  
   lance,  
 And shame too long delay'd and vain  
   retreat!  
 For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim  
 I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy  
   flame;  
   But blessed the pæans of delivered  
   France,  
 And hung my head and wept at Britain's  
   name.

## III

"And what," I said, "though Blas-  
   phemy's loud scream  
   With that sweet music of deliverance  
   strove!  
   Though all the fierce and drunken  
   passions wove  
 A dance more wild than e'er was  
   maniac's dream!  
   Ye storms, that round the dawning  
   east assembled,  
 The Sun was rising, though ye hid his  
   light!  
   And when to soothe my soul, that  
   hoped and trembled,  
 The dissonance ceased, and all seemed  
   calm and bright;  
   When France her front deep-scarr'd  
   and gory  
   Concealed with clustering wreaths of  
   glory;  
   When insupportably advancing,  
   Her arm made mockery of the war-  
   rior's ramp;  
   While timid looks of fury glancing.  
   Domestic treason, crushed beneath her  
   fatal stamp,  
 Writhed like a wounded dragon in his  
   gore;  
   Then I reproached my fears that  
   would not flee;  
   "And soon," I said, "shall Wisdom  
   teach her lore  
 In the low huts of them that toil and  
   groan;  
 And, conquering by her happiness  
   alone,  
   Shall France compel the nations to be  
   free,  
 Till Love and Joy look round, and call  
   the earth their own."

## IV

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those  
   dreams!  
 I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud  
   lament.

From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns  
sent—  
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained  
streams !  
Heroes, that for your peaceful country  
perished,  
And ye, that fleeing, spot your moun-  
tain snows  
With bleeding wounds ; forgive me,  
that I cherished  
One thought that ever blessed your cruel  
foes !  
To scatter rage and traitorous guilt  
Where Peace her jealous home had  
built ;  
A patriot-race to disinherit  
Of all that made their stormy wilds so  
dear ;  
And with inexorable spirit  
To taint the bloodless freedom of the  
mountaineer—  
O France, that mockest Heaven, adul-  
terous, blind,  
And patriot only in pernicious toils !  
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human  
kind ?  
To mix with Kings in the low lust of  
sway,  
Yell in the hunt, and share the murder-  
ous prey ;  
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils  
From freemen torn ; to tempt and to  
betray ?

## v

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in  
vain,  
Slaves by their own compulsion ! In  
mad game  
They burst their manacles and wear  
the name  
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier  
chain !  
O Liberty ! with profitless endeavor  
Have I pursued thee, many a weary  
hour ;  
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain  
nor ever  
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human  
power.  
Alike from all, howe'er they praise  
thee,  
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays  
thee)  
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy  
minions,  
And factious Blasphemy's obscener  
slaves,

Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,  
The guide of homeless winds, and play-  
mate of the waves !  
And then I felt thee !—on that sea-cliff's  
verge,  
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the  
breeze above,  
Had made one murmur with the distant  
surge !  
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples  
bare,  
And shot my being through earth, sea  
and air,  
Possessing all things with intensest  
love,  
O Liberty ! my spirit felt thee there.  
*February, 1798. April 18, 1798.*

## FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE Frost performs its secret ministry,  
Unhelped by any wind. The owl's  
cry  
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as  
before.  
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,  
Have left me to that solitude, which  
suits  
Abstruser musings : save that at my  
side  
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.  
'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it dis-  
turbs  
And vexes meditation with its strange  
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and  
wood,  
This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and  
wood,  
With all the numberless goings-on of  
life,  
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue  
flame  
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers  
not ;  
Only that film, which fluttered on the  
grate,  
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet  
thing.  
Methinks, its motion in this hush of  
nature  
Gives it dim sympathies with me who  
live,  
Making it a companionable form,  
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling  
Spirit  
By its own moods interprets, everywhere  
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,  
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O! how oft,  
 How oft, at school, with most believing  
     mind,  
 Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,  
 To watch that fluttering *stranger*! and  
     as oft  
 With unclosed lids, already had I  
     dreamt  
 Of my sweet birth-place, and the old  
     church-tower,  
 Whose bells the poor man's only music  
     rang  
 From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-  
     day,  
 So sweetly, that they stirred and  
     haunted me  
 With a wild pleasure, falling on mine  
     ear  
 Most like articulate sounds of things to  
     come!  
 So gazed I, till the soothing things, I  
     dreamt,  
 Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged  
     my dreams!  
 And so I boded all the following morn,  
 Awed by the stern preceptor's face,  
     mine eye  
 Fixed with mock study on my swim-  
     ming book:  
 Save if the door half opened, and I  
     snatched  
 A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped  
     up,  
 For still I hoped to see the *stranger's*  
     face,  
 Townsman, or aunt, or sister more be-  
     loved,  
 My play-mate when we both were  
     clothed alike!  
     Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by  
     my side,  
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this  
     deep calm,  
 Fill up the interspersed vacancies  
 And momentary pauses of the thought!  
 My babe so beautiful! it thrills my  
     heart  
 With tender gladness, thus to look at  
     thee,  
 And think that thou shalt learn far  
     other lore,  
 And in far other scenes! For I was  
     reared  
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters  
     dim,  
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and  
     stars.  
 But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a  
     breeze

By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the  
     crag  
 Of ancient mountain, and beneath the  
     clouds,  
 Which image in their bulk both lakes  
     and shores  
 And mountain crags: so shalt thou see  
     and hear  
 The lovely shapes and sounds intelligi-  
     ble  
 Of that eternal language, which thy  
     God  
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
 Himself in all, and all things in himself.  
 Great universal Teacher! he shall mould  
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.  
     Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to  
     thee,  
 Whether the summer clothe the general  
     earth  
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and  
     sing  
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare  
     branch  
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh  
     thatch  
 Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the  
     eave-drops fall  
 Heard only in the trances of the blast,  
 Or if the secret ministry of frost  
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,  
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.  
     February, 1798. 1798.

## LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
 All are but ministers of Love,  
     And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
 Live o'er again that happy hour,  
 When midway on the mount I lay,  
     Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene  
 Had blended with the lights of eve:  
 And she was there, my hope, my joy  
     My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,  
 The statue of the armed knight;  
 She stood and listened to my lay,  
     Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
 My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!  
 She loves me best, whene'er I sing  
     The songs that make her grieve.



I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song, that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
For well she knew, I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes, and modest grace  
And she forgave me, that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain-  
woods,  
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade  
And sometimes starting up at once  
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright;  
And that he knew it was a Fiend,  
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than  
death  
The Lady of the Land!

And how she wept, and clasped his  
knees;  
And how she tended him in vain—  
And ever strove to expiate  
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest-leaves  
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
My faltering voice and pausing harp  
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;  
The music and the doleful tale,  
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
An undistinguishable throng,  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,  
She blushed with love, and virgin-  
shame;  
And like the murmur of a dream,  
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,  
As conscious of my look she stepped—  
Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,  
She pressed me with a meek embrace:  
And bending back her head, looked up,  
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel, than see,  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
My bright and beauteous Bride,  
1798-1799. December 21, 1799.

### THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIÉ

#### A FRAGMENT

BENEATH yon birch with silver bark,  
And boughs so pendulous and fair,  
The brook falls scatter'd down the rock:  
And all is mossy there!

And there upon the moss she sits,  
The Dark Ladié in silent pain;  
The heavy tear is in her eye,  
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page  
Up the castled mountain's breast,  
If he might find the Knight that wears  
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,  
And she had linger'd there all day,  
Counting moments, dreaming fears—  
Oh wherefore can he stay?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,  
 She sees far off a swinging bough!  
 "Tis He! 'Tis my betrothed Knight!  
 Lord Falkland, it is Thou!"

She springs, she clasps him round the  
 neck,  
 She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,  
 Her kisses glowing on his cheeks  
 She quenches with her tears.

\* \* \* \*

"My friends with rude ungentle words  
 They scoff and bid me fly to thee!  
 O give me shelter in thy breast!  
 O shield and shelter me!"

"My Henry, I have given thee much,  
 I gave what I can ne'er recall.  
 I gave my heart, I gave my peace,  
 O Heaven! I gave thee all."

The Knight made answer to the Maid,  
 While to his heart he held her hand,  
 "Nine castles hath my noble sire,  
 None statelier in the land."

"The fairest one shall be my love's,  
 The fairest castle of the nine!  
 Wait only till the stars peep out,  
 The fairest shall be thine:"

"Wait only till the hand of eve  
 Hath wholly closed yon western bars,  
 And through the dark we two will steal  
 Beneath the twinkling stars!"—

"The dark? the dark? No! not the  
 dark!  
 The twinkling stars? How, Henry?  
 How?  
 O God! 'twas in the eye of noon  
 He pledged his sacred vow!"

"And in the eye of noon my love  
 Shall lead me from my mother's door,  
 Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white  
 Strewing flowers before:"

"But first the nodding minstrels go  
 With music meet for lordly bowers,  
 The children next in snow-white vests,  
 Strewing buds and flowers!"

"And then my love and I shall pace,  
 My jet black hair in pearly braids,  
 Between our comely bachelors  
 And blushing bridal maids."

\* \* \* \*

1798. 1834.

## LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE,  
 IN THE HARTZ FOREST

I STOOD on Brocken's sovran height, and  
 saw  
 Woods crowding upon woods, hills over  
 hills,

A surging scene, and only limited  
 By the blue distance. Heavily my way  
 Downward I dragged through fir groves  
 evermore,

Where bright green moss heaves in  
 sepulchral forms  
 Speckled with sunshine; and, but sel-  
 dom heard,

The sweet bird's song became an hollow  
 sound:

And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,  
 Preserved its solemn murmur most dis-  
 tinct

From many a note of many a waterfall,  
 And the brook's chatter; 'mid whose  
 islet-stones

The dingy kidding with its tinkling bell  
 Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat  
 Sat, his white beard slow waving. I  
 moved on

In low and languid mood: for I had  
 found

That outward forms, the loftiest, still  
 receive

Their finer influence from the Life  
 within;—

Fair cyphers else: fair, but of import  
 vague

Or unconcerning, where the heart not  
 finds

History or prophecy of friend, or child,  
 Or gentle maid, our first and early love,  
 Or father, or the venerable name

Of our adored country! O thou Queen,  
 Thou delegated Deity of Earth,

O dear, dear England! how my longing  
 eye

Turned westward, shaping in the steady  
 clouds

Thy sands and high white cliffs!

My native Land!

Filled with the thought of thee this  
 heart was proud,

Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that  
 all the view

From sovran Brocken, woods and woody  
 hills,

Floated away, like a departing dream,

Feeble and dim! Stranger, these impulses  
 Blame thou not lightly; nor will I profane,  
 With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,  
 That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel  
 That God is everywhere! the God who framed  
 Mankind to be one mighty family,  
 Himself our Father, and the World our Home.  
*May 17, 1799. September 17, 1799.*

#### ODE TO TRANQUILLITY

TRANQUILLITY! thou better name  
 Than all the family of Fame!  
 Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age  
 To low intrigue, or factious rage;  
 For oh! dear child of thoughtful Truth,  
 To thee I gave my early youth.  
 And left the bark, and blest the steadfast shore,  
 Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,  
 On him but seldom, Power divine,  
 Thy spirit rests! Satiety  
 And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,  
 Mock the tired worldling. Idle Hope  
 And dire Remembrance interlope,  
 To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:  
 The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead  
 At morning through the accustomed mead:  
 And in the sultry summer's heat  
 Will build me up a mossy seat;  
 And when the gust of Autumn crowds,  
 And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,  
 Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,  
 Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,  
 To thee I dedicate the whole!  
 And while within myself I trace  
 The greatness of some future race,  
 Aloof with hermit-eye I scan

The present works of present man—  
 A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,  
 Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile! 1801. December 4, 1801.

#### DEJECTION: AN ODE<sup>1</sup>

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,  
 With the old Moon in her arms;  
 And I fear, I fear, my master dear!  
 We shall have a deadly storm.  
*Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.*

#### I

WELL! If the Bard was weather-wise,  
 who made  
 The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,  
 This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence  
 Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade  
 Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,  
 Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes  
 Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,  
 Which better far were mute.  
 For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!  
 And overspread with phantom light,  
 (With swimming phantom light o'er-spread  
 But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)  
 I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling  
 The coming-on of rain and squally blast,  
 And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,  
 And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!  
 Those sounds which oft have raised me,  
 whilst they awed,  
 And sent my soul abroad,  
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,  
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live!

<sup>1</sup> This Ode was originally written to William Wordsworth, who was addressed as "Edmund" in the poem when first printed, on the day of Wordsworth's marriage, October 4, 1802. In that copy, the name "Edmund" occurs at every point where "Lady" is found in the later versions and also where the name "Otway" occurs, in the seventh stanza: there is a corresponding difference of the personal pronouns, and some other slight differences of text, the most important of which is in the conclusion, as noted below.

## II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and  
drear,  
Astifed, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,  
Which finds no natural outlet, no re-  
lief,

In word, or sigh, or tear—  
O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,  
To other thoughts by yonder throstle  
woo'd,

All this long eve, so balmy and serene,  
Have I been gazing on the western sky,  
And its peculiar tint of yellow green :  
And still I gaze—and with how blank  
an eye !

And those thin clouds above, in flakes  
and bars,

That give away their motion to the stars :  
Those stars, that glide behind them or  
between,

Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but al-  
ways seen ;

Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew  
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;  
I see them all so excellently fair,  
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are !

## III

My genial spirits fail ;  
And what can these avail  
To lift the smothering weight from off  
my breast ?

It were a vain endeavor,  
Though I should gaze for ever  
On that green light that lingers in the  
west ;

I may not hope from outward forms to  
win

The passion and the life, whose foun-  
tains are within.

## IV

O Lady ! we receive but what we give,  
And in our life alone does Nature live ;  
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her  
shroud !

And would we aught behold, of higher  
worth,

Than that inanimate cold world allowed  
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,  
Ah ! from the soul itself must issue  
forth

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
Enveloping the Earth—

And from the soul itself must there be  
sent

A sweet and potent voice, of its own  
birth,

Of all sweet sounds the life and element !

## V

O pure of heart ! thou need'st not ask  
of me  
What this strong music in the soul may  
be !

What, and wherein it doth exist,  
This light, this glory, this fair luminous  
mist,

This beautiful and beauty-making  
power.

Joy, virtuous Lady ! Joy that ne'er  
was given,

Save to the pure, and in their purest  
hour.

Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once  
and shower,

Joy, Lady ! is the spirit and the power,  
Which wedding Nature to us gives in  
dower,

A new Earth and new Heaven,  
Undreamt of by the sensual and the  
proud—

Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous  
cloud—

We in ourselves rejoice !  
And thence flows all that charms our ear  
or sight,

All melodies the echoes of that voice,  
All colors a suffusion from that light.

## VI

There was a time when, though my path  
was rough,

This joy within me dallied with dis-  
tress,

And all misfortunes were but as the stuff  
Whence Fancy made me dreams of  
happiness :

For hope grew round me, like the twin-  
ing vine,

And fruits, and foliage, not my own,  
seemed mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to  
earth :

Nor care I that they rob me of my  
mirth ;

But oh ! each visitation  
Suspends what nature gave me at my  
birth,

My shaping spirit of Imagination.  
For not to think of what I needs must  
feel,

But to be still and patient, all I can ;  
And haply by abstruse research to steal  
From my own nature all the natural  
man—

This was my sole resource, my only  
plan ;

Till that which suits a part infects the whole,  
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

## VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,  
Reality's dark dream!  
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,  
Which long has raved unnoticed.  
What a scream  
Of agony by torture lengthened out  
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that rav'st without,  
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,  
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,  
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,  
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,  
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,  
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,  
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,  
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.  
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!  
Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold!  
What tell'st thou now about?  
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,  
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds—  
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!  
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!  
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,  
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—  
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!  
A tale of less affright,  
And tempered with delight,  
As Otway's<sup>1</sup> self had framed the tender lay.

<sup>1</sup> In the first printed copy, "*Edmund's*," referring to Wordsworth. The following lines are evidently an allusion to Wordsworth's *Lucy Gray*. The conclusion is as follows in the first printed copy:

With light heart may he rise,  
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,  
And sing his lofty song, and teach me to rejoice!

'Tis of a little child  
Upon a lonesome wild,  
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way;  
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,  
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

## VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:  
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!  
Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,  
And may this storm be but a moun-tain-birth,  
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,  
Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth!  
With light heart may she rise,  
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes.  
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;  
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,  
Their life the eddying of her living soul!  
O simple spirit, guided from above,  
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,  
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

April 4, 1802. October 4, 1802.

## HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI

Besides the Rivers Arve and Arvelron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides; and within a few paces of the glaciers the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers, with its "flowers of loveliest blue." (*Coleridge*.)

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star  
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause

O EDMUND, friend of my devoutest choice,  
O rais'd from anxious dread and busy care,  
By the immenseness of the good and fair  
Which thou see'st everywhere,  
Joy lifts thy spirit, joy attunes thy voice,  
To thee do all things live from pole to pole,  
Their life the eddying of thy living soul!  
O simple spirit, guided from above,  
O lofty Poet, full of life and love,  
Brother and friend of my devoutest choice,  
Thus may'st Thou ever, evermore rejoice!

On thy bald awful head, O sovran  
 BLANC!  
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base  
 Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful  
 Form!  
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,  
 How silently! Around thee and above  
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial,  
 black,  
 An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest  
 it,  
 As with a wedge! But when I look  
 again,  
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal  
 shrine,  
 Thy habitation from eternity!  
 O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon  
 thee,  
 Till thou, still present to the bodily  
 sense,  
 Didst vanish from my thought: en-  
 tranced in prayer  
 I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,  
 So sweet, we know not we are listening  
 to it,  
 Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending  
 with my Thought,  
 Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret  
 joy:  
 Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,  
 Into the mighty vision passing—there  
 As in her natural form, swelled vast to  
 Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive  
 praise  
 Thou owest! not alone these swelling  
 tears,  
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,  
 Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart,  
 awake!  
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my  
 Hymn.  
 Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of  
 the Vale!  
 O struggling with the darkness all the  
 night,  
 And visited all night by troops of stars,  
 Or when they climb the sky or when  
 they sink:  
 Companion of the morning-star at dawn,  
 Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the  
 dawn  
 Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter  
 praise!  
 Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in  
 Earth?

Who fill'd thy countenance with rosy  
 light?  
 Who made thee parent of perpetual  
 streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely  
 glad!  
 Who called you forth from night and  
 utter death,  
 From dark and icy caverns called you  
 forth,  
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged  
 rocks,  
 For ever shattered and the same for  
 ever?  
 Who gave you your invulnerable life,  
 Your strength, your speed, your fury,  
 and your joy,  
 Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?  
 And who commanded (and the silence  
 came),  
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have  
 rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the moun-  
 tain's brow  
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain—  
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty  
 voice,  
 And stopped at once amid their maddest  
 plunge!  
 Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!  
 Who made you glorious as the Gates of  
 Heaven  
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade  
 the sun  
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with  
 living flowers  
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at  
 your feet?—  
 GOD! let the torrents, like a shout of  
 nations,  
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo,  
 GOD!  
 GOD! sing ye meadow-streams with  
 gladsome voice!  
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-  
 like sounds!  
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of  
 snow,  
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder,  
 GOD!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal  
 frost!  
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's  
 nest!  
 Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-  
 storm!

Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the  
clouds !  
Ye signs and wonders of the element !  
Utter forth GOD, and fill the hills with  
praise !

Thou too, hoar Mount ! with thy sky-  
pointing peaks,  
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, un-  
heard,  
Shoots downward, glittering through the  
pure serene  
Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy  
breast—  
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain !  
thou  
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed  
low  
In adoration, upward from thy base  
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused  
with tears,  
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,  
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,  
Rise like a cloud of incense from the  
Earth !  
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the  
hills,  
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to  
Heaven,  
Great Hierarch ! tell thou the silent  
sky,  
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising  
sun  
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises  
GOD.

1802. September 11, 1802.

#### THE GOOD, GREAT MAN

“How seldom, friend ! a good great man  
inherits  
Honor or wealth with all his worth  
and pains !  
It sounds like stories from the land of  
spirits  
If any man obtain that which he  
merits  
Or any merit that which he obtains.”

#### REPLY TO THE ABOVE

FOR shame, dear friend, renounce this  
canting strain !  
What would'st thou have a good great  
man obtain ?  
Place ? titles ? salary ? a gilded chain ?  
Or throne of corpses which his sword had  
slain ?  
Greatness and goodness are not *means*,  
but *ends* !

Hath he not always treasures, always  
friends,  
The good great man ? *three* treasures,  
LOVE, and LIGHT,  
And CALM THOUGHTS, regular as infant's  
breath :  
And three firm friends, more sure than  
day and night,  
HIMSELF, his MAKER, and the ANGEL  
DEATH !

1802. September 23, 1802.

#### THE PAINS OF SLEEP

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,  
It hath not been my use to pray  
With moving lips or bended knees ;  
But silently, by slow degrees,  
My spirit I to Love compose,  
In humble trust mine eyelids close,  
With reverential resignation,  
No wish conceived, no thought exprest,  
Only a *sense* of supplication ;  
A sense o'er all my soul imprest  
That I am weak, yet not unblest,  
Since in me, round me, everywhere  
Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

But yester-night I pray'd aloud  
In anguish and in agony,  
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd  
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured  
me :

A lurid light, a trampling throng,  
Sense of intolerable wrong,  
And whom I scorned, those only strong !  
Thirst of revenge, the powerless will  
Still baffled, and yet burning still !  
Desire with loathing strangely mixed  
On wild or hateful objects fixed.  
Fantastic passions ! maddening brawl !  
And shame and terror over all !  
Deeds to be hid which were not hid,  
Which all confused I could not know  
Whether I suffered, or I did :  
For all seem'd guilt, remorse or woe,  
My own or others still the same  
Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame !

So two nights passed : the night's dis-  
may

Saddened and stunned the coming day.  
Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me  
Distemper's worst calmity.

The third night, when my own loud  
scream

Had waked me from the fiendish dream,  
O'ercome with sufferings strange and  
wild,

I wept as I had been a child :  
 And having thus by tears subdued  
 My anguish to a milder mood,  
 Such punishments, I said, were due  
 To natures deepliest stained with sin :  
 For aye entempesting anew  
 The unfathomable hell within  
 The horror of their deeds to view,  
 To know and loathe, yet wish and do !  
 Such griefs with such men well agree,  
 But wherefore, wherefore fall on me ?  
 To be beloved is all I need,  
 And whom I love, I love indeed.  
 1803. 1816.

### TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RE-  
 CITATION OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH  
 OF AN INDIVIDUAL MIND

FRIEND of the wise ! and Teacher of the  
 Good !  
 Into my heart have I received that Lay  
 More than historic, that prophetic Lay  
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung  
 aright)  
 Of the foundations and the building up  
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to  
 tell  
 What may be told, to the understanding  
 mind  
 Revealeable ; and what within the mind  
 By vital breathings secret as the soul  
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the  
 heart  
 Thoughts all too deep for words !—  
 Theme hard as high !  
 Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious  
 fears  
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-  
 birth),  
 Of tides obedient to external force,  
 And currents self-determined, as might  
 seem,  
 Or by some inner Power ; of moments  
 awful,  
 Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,  
 When power streamed from thee, and  
 thy soul received  
 The light reflected, as a light bestowed—  
 Of fancies fair, and milder hours of  
 youth,  
 Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought  
 Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens  
 Native or outland, lakes and famous  
 hills !  
 Or on the lonely high-road, when the  
 stars

Were rising : or by secret mountain-  
 streams,  
 The guides and the companions of thy  
 way !

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense  
 Distending wide, and man beloved as  
 man,  
 Where France in all her towns lay vi-  
 brating  
 Like some becalmed bark beneath the  
 burst  
 Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when  
 no cloud  
 Is visible, or shadow on the main.  
 For thou wert there, thine own brows  
 garlanded,  
 Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,  
 Amid a mighty nation jubilant,  
 When from the general heart of human-  
 kind  
 Hope sprang forth like a full-born  
 Deity !  
 —Of that dear Hope afflicted and  
 struck down,  
 So summoned homeward, thenceforth  
 calm and sure  
 From the dread watch-tower of man's  
 absolute self  
 With light unwaning on her eyes, to  
 look  
 Far on—herself a glory to behold,  
 The angel of the vision ! Then (last  
 strain)  
 Of Duty, chosen Laws controlling choice,  
 Action and joy !—An orphic song in-  
 deed,  
 A song divine of high and passionate  
 thoughts  
 To their own music chanted !

O great Bard !  
 Ere yet that last strain dying awed the  
 air,  
 With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the  
 choir  
 Of ever-enduring men. The truly great  
 Have all one age, and from one visible  
 space  
 Shed influence ! They, both in power  
 and act,  
 Are permanent, and Time is not with  
 them,  
 Save as it worketh for them, they in it.  
 Nor less a sacred Roll than those of old,  
 And to be placed, as they, with gradual  
 fame  
 Among the archives of mankind, thy  
 work



Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,  
 Of Truth profound a sweet continuous  
 lay,  
 Not learnt, but native, her own natural  
 notes!  
<sup>1</sup> Ah! as I listen'd with a heart forlorn,  
 The pulses of my being beat anew:  
 And even as life returns upon the  
 drowned,  
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of  
 pains—  
 Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a  
 babe  
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart;  
 And fears self-willed, that shunned the  
 eye of hope;  
 And hope that scarce would know itself  
 from fear;  
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come  
 in vain,  
 And genius given, and knowledge won  
 in vain;  
 And all which I had culled in wood-  
 walks wide,  
 And all which patient toil had reared,  
 and all  
 Commune with *thee* had opened out—  
 but flowers  
 Strewed on my corse, and borne upon  
 my bier,  
 In the same coffin, for the self-same  
 grave!

That way no more! and ill beseems  
 it me,  
 Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,  
 Singing of glory, and futurity,  
 To wander back on such unhealthful  
 road,  
 Plucking the poisons of self-harm! And  
 ill  
 Such intertwine beseems triumphal  
 wreaths

<sup>1</sup> In place of this line and the next, there stood  
 in the manuscript copy of January 1807 the  
 following lines:

Dear shall it be to every human heart,  
 To me how more than dearest! me, on whom  
 Comfort from thee, and utterance of thy love,  
 Came with such heights and depths of harmony.  
 Such sense of wings unlifting, that its might  
 Scatter'd and quell'd me, till my thoughts be-  
 came

A bodily tumult; and thy faithful hopes,  
 Thy hopes of me, dear Friend, by me unfelt!  
 Were troublous to me, almost as a voice,  
 Familiar once, and more than musical:  
 As a dear woman's voice to one cast forth,  
 A wanderer with a worn-out heart forlorn,  
 Mid strangers pining with untended wounds.  
 O Friend, too well thou know'st, of what sad  
 years

The long suppression had benumb'd my soul. . . .

Strew'd before *thy* advancing!  
 Nor do thou,  
 Sage Bard! impair the memory of that  
 hour  
 Of thy communion with my nobler  
 mind  
 By pity or grief, already felt too long!  
 Nor let my words import more blame  
 than needs.  
 The tumult rose and ceased: for Peace  
 is nigh  
 Where wisdom's voice has found a  
 listening heart.  
 Amid the howl of more than wintry  
 storms,  
 The halcyon hears the voice of vernal  
 hours  
 Already on the wing.  
 Eve following eve,  
 Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense  
 of Home  
 Is sweetest! moments for their own sake  
 hailed  
 And more desired, more precious, for  
 thy song.  
 In silence listening, like a devout  
 child,  
 My soul lay passive, by thy various  
 strain  
 Driven as in surges now beneath the  
 stars,  
 With momentary stars of my own  
 birth,  
 Fair constellated foam, still darting off  
 Into the darkness; now a tranquil  
 sea,  
 Outspread and bright, yet swelling to  
 the moon.

And when—O Friend! my comforter  
 and guide!  
 Strong in thyself, and powerful to give  
 strength!—  
 Thy long sustained Song finally closed,  
 And thy deep voice had ceased—yet  
 thou thyself  
 Wert still before my eyes, and round us  
 both  
 That happy vision of beloved faces—  
 Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of  
 its close  
 I sate, my being blended in one thought  
 (Thought was it? or aspiration? or re-  
 solve?)  
 Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the  
 sound—  
 And when I rose, I found myself in  
 prayer.

January, 1807. 1817.

## SONG FROM ZAPOLYA

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,  
From sky to earth it slanted :  
And poised therein a bird so bold—  
Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted !

He sunk, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled  
Within that shaft of sunny mist ;  
His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,  
All else of amethyst !

And thus he sang : Adieu ! adieu !  
Love's dreams prove seldom true.  
The blossoms they make no delay ;  
The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.  
Sweet month of May,  
We must away ;  
Far far away !  
To-day ! to-day ! 1815. 1817.

## YOUTH AND AGE

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,  
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—  
Both were mine ! Life went a-maying  
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,  
When I was young !  
When I was young ?—Ah, woeful When !  
Ah ! for the change 'twixt Now and  
Then !

This breathing house not built with  
hands,

This body that does me grievous wrong,  
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,  
How lightly *then* it flashed along :—  
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,  
On winding lakes and rivers wide,  
That ask no aid of sail or oar,  
That fear no spite of wind or tide !  
Nought cared this body for wind or  
weather

When Youth and I lived in't together.  
Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like ;  
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;  
O ! the joys, that came down shower-like,  
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,

Ere I was old !  
Ere I was old ? Ah woeful Ere,  
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !  
O, Youth ! for years so many and sweet,  
Tis known, that Thou and I were one,  
I'll think it but a fond conceit—  
It cannot be that Thou art gone !  
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—  
And thou wert aye a masker bold !  
What strange disguise hast now put on,  
To make believe, that thou art gone ?  
I see these locks in silvery slips,

This drooping gait, this altered size :  
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,  
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !  
Life is but thought : so think I will  
That Youth and I are house-mates still.  
Dew-drops are the gems of morning,  
But the tears of mournful eve !  
Where no hope is, life 's a warning  
That only serves to make us grieve,  
When we are old :  
That only serves to make us grieve  
With oft and tedious taking-leave  
Like some poor nigh-related guest,  
That may not rudely be dismiss ;  
Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,  
And tells the jest without the smile.  
1823—April, 1832. 1828—June, 1832.

## WORK WITHOUT HOPE

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave  
their lair—  
The bees are stirring—birds are on the  
wing—

And Winter slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of  
Spring !

And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,  
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build,  
nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,  
Have traced the fount whence streams  
of nectar flow.

Bloom, O ye amaranths ! bloom for  
whom ye may,  
For me ye bloom not ! Glide, rich  
streams, away !

With lips unbrightened, wreathless  
brow, I stroll :

And would you learn the spells that  
drowse my soul ?

Work without Hope draws nectar in a  
sieve.

And Hope without an object cannot live.  
*February, 1827. 1828.*

## THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO

Or late, in one of those most weary  
hours,

When life seems emptied of all genial  
powers,

A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has  
known

May bless his happy lot, I sate alone ;

And, from the numbing spell to win re-  
lief,

Call'd on the Past for thought of glee or  
[grief.]

In vain ! bereft alike of grief and glee,  
 I sate and cower'd o'er my own vacancy !  
 And as I watched the dull continuous  
     ache,  
 Which, all else slumbering, seem'd alone  
     to wake ;  
 O Friend ! long wont to notice yet conceal,  
 And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,  
 I but half saw that quiet hand of thine  
 Place on my desk this exquisite design,  
 Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,  
 The love, the joyaunce, and the gallantry !  
 An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,  
 Framed in the silent poesy of form.  
 Like flocks a-down a newly-bathed steep  
     Emerging from a mist : or like a stream  
 Of music soft, that not dispels the sleep,  
     But casts in happier moulds the  
     slumberer's dream.  
 Gazed by an idle eye with silent might  
 The picture stole upon my inward sight.  
 A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er  
     my chest,  
 As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast.  
 And one by one (I know not whence)  
     were brought  
 All spirits of power that most had stirr'd  
     my thought  
 In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost  
 Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost ;  
 Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from above,  
 Loved ere it loved, and sought a form  
     for love ;  
 Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan  
 Of manhood, musing what and whence  
     is man !  
 Wild strain of Scalds, that in the seaworn caves  
 Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds  
     and waves ;  
 Or fateful hymn of those prophetic  
     maids,  
 That call'd on Hertha in deep forest  
     glades ;  
 Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's  
     feast ;  
 Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and  
     priest.  
 Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long  
     array,  
 To high-church pacing on the great  
     saint's day.  
 And many a verse which to myself I sang,

That woke the tear yet stole away the pang.  
 Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.  
 And last, a matron now, of sober mien,  
 Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,  
 Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd  
 Even in my dawn of thought—Philosophy ;  
 Though then unconscious of herself, pardie,  
 She bore no other name than Poesy ;  
 And, like a gift from heaven, in life's glee,  
 That had but newly left a mother's knee,  
 Prattled and play'd with bird and flower,  
     and stone,  
 As if with elfin playfellows well known,  
 And life reveal'd to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist ! now I can descry  
 Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,  
 And all awake ! And now in fix'd gaze stand,  
 Now wander through the Eden of thy hand ;  
 Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear  
 See fragment shadows of the crossing deer ;  
 And with that serviceable nymph I stoop  
 The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.  
 I see no longer ! I myself am there,  
 Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.  
 'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,  
 And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings ;  
 Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells  
 Frow the high tower, and think that there she dwells.  
 With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possess'd,  
 And breathe an air like life, that swells my chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou once free,  
 And always fair, rare land of courtesy !  
 O Florence ! with the Tuscan fields and hills  
 And famous Arno, fed with all their rills ;  
 Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy !  
 Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,  
 The golden corn, the olive, and the vine,

Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,  
And forests, where beside his leafy hold  
The sullen boar hath heard the distant  
    horn,  
And whets his tusks against the gnarled  
    thorn ;  
Palladian palace with its storied halls ;  
Fountains, where Love lies listening to  
    their falls ;  
Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy  
    span,  
And Nature makes her happy home  
    with man ;  
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly  
    fed  
With its own rill, on its own spangled  
    bed,  
And weathes the marble urn, or leans  
    its head,  
A mimic mourner, that with veil with-  
    drawn  
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the  
    dawn ;—  
Thine all delights, and every muse is  
    thine ;  
And more than all, the embrace and  
    intertwine  
Of all with all in gay and twinkling  
    dance !

Mid gods of Greece and warriors of  
romance,  
See! Boccace sits, unfolding on his  
knees  
The new found roll of old Mæonides;  
But from his mantle's fold, and near the  
heart,  
Peers Ovid's Holy Book of Love's sweet  
smart!<sup>1</sup>

O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,  
Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,  
Where half conceal'd, the eye of fancy  
views

**Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all  
gracious to thy muse !**

1 I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the Filicopo of Boccaccio, where the sage instructor, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl Biancofiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the Holy Book, Ovid's Art of Love. "Incominciò Racheo a mettere il suo officio in esecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, fece leggere il santo libro d'Ovvidio, nel quale il sommo poeta mostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano ne' freddi cuori accendere." — (Coleridge.)

Still in thy garden let me watch their  
pranks,  
And see in Dian's vest between the  
ranks  
Of the trim vines, some maid that half  
believes  
The vestal fires, of which her lover  
grieves,  
With that sly satyr peeping through the  
leaves !  
1828. 1829.

## PHANTOM OR FACT

## A DIALOGUE IN VERSE

**AUTHOR**

A LOVELY form there sate beside my  
bed,  
And such a feeling calm its presence  
shed,  
A tender love so pure from earthly  
leaven,  
That I unnethe the fancy might con-  
trol,  
’Twas my own spirit newly come from  
heaven,  
Wooing its gentle way into my soul !  
But ah ! the change—It had not stirr’d,  
and yet—  
Alas ! that change how fain would I  
forget !  
That shrinking back, like one that had  
mistook !  
That weary, wandering, disavowing  
look !  
’Twas all another, feature, look, and  
frame,  
And still, methought, I knew, it was  
the same !

**FRIEND**

This riddling tale, to what does it be-  
long?  
Is't history? vision? or an idle song?  
Or rather say at once, within what  
space  
Of time this wild disastrous change took  
place?

**AUTHOR**

Call it a *moment's* work (and such it  
seems)  
This tale's a fragment from the life of  
dreams ;  
But say, that years matur'd the silent  
strife,  
And 'tis a record from the dream of life.  
1830. 1834.

# SCOTT

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## SCOTT

### WILLIAM AND HELEN

Imitated from Bürger's *Lenore*. See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Volume I, Chap. 7.

FROM heavy dreams fair Helen rose,  
And eyed the dawning red :  
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long !  
O art thou false or dead ?"

With gallant Frederick's princely power  
He sought the bold crusade,  
But not a word from Judah's wars  
Told Helen how he sped.

With Paynim and with Saracen  
At length a truce was made.  
And every knight returned to dry  
The tears his love had shed.

Our gallant host was homeward bound  
With many a song of joy ;  
Green waved the laurel in each plume,  
The badge of victory.

And old and young, and sire and son,  
To meet them crowd the way,  
With shouts and mirth and melody,  
The debt of love to pay.

Full many a maid her true-love met,  
And sobbed in his embrace,  
And fluttering joy in tears and smiles  
Arrayed full many a face.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad,  
She sought the host in vain ;  
For none could tell her William's fate,  
If faithless or if slain.

The martial band is past and gone ;  
She rends her raven hair,  
And in distraction's bitter mood  
She weeps with wild despair.

"O, rise, my child," her mother said,  
"Nor sorrow thus in vain ;  
A perjured lover's fleeting heart  
No tears recall again."

"O, Mother, what is gone is gone,  
What's lost forever lorn :  
Death, death alone can comfort me ;  
O had I ne'er been born !

"O, break, my heart, O, break at once !  
Drink my life-blood, Despair !  
No joy remains on earth for me,  
For me in heaven no share."

"O, enter not in judgment, Lord !"  
The pious mother prays ;  
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child !  
She knows not what she says.

"O, say thy pater-noster, child !  
O, turn to God and grace !  
His will, that turned thy bliss to bale,  
Can change thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss ?  
O mother, what is bale ?  
My William's love was heaven on earth,  
Without it earth is hell.

"Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,  
Since my loved William's slain ?  
I only prayed for William's sake,  
And all my prayers were vain."

"O, take the sacrament, my child,  
And check these tears that flow ;  
By resignation's humble prayer,  
O, hallowed be thy woe !"

"No sacrament can quench this fire,  
Or slake this scorching pain ;  
No sacrament can bid the dead  
Arise and live again.

"O, break, my heart, O, break at once !  
Be thou my god, Despair !  
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,  
And vain each fruitless prayer."

"O, enter not in judgment, Lord,  
With thy frail child of clay !  
She knows not what her tongue has  
spoke ;  
Impute it not, I pray !

"Forbear, my child, this desperate woe,  
And turn to God and grace ;  
Well can devotion's heavenly glow  
Convert thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss ?  
O mother, what is bale ?  
Without my William what were heaven,  
Or with him what were hell ?"

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,  
Upbraids each sacred power,  
Till, spent, she sought her silent room,  
All in the lonely tower.

She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,  
Till sun and day were o'er,  
And through the glimmering lattice shone  
The twinkling of the star.

Then, crash ! the heavy drawbridge fell  
That o'er the moat was hung ;  
And, clatter ! clatter ! on its boards  
The hoof of courser rung.

The clank of echoing steel was heard  
As off the rider bounded ;  
And slowly on the winding stair  
A heavy footstep sounded.

And hark ! and hark ! a knock — tap !  
tap !  
A rustling stifled noise ;—  
Door-latch and tinkling staples ring ;—  
At length a whispering voice.

"Awake, awake, arise, my love !  
How, Helen, dost thou fare ?  
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st ! laugh'st thou,  
or weep'st ?  
Hast thought on me, my fair ?"

"My love ! my love !—so late by night !—  
I waked, I wept for thee ;  
Much have I borne since dawn of morn ;  
Where, William, couldst thou be ?"

"We saddle late—from Hungary  
I rode since darkness fell ;  
And to its bourne we both return  
Before the matin-bell."

"O, rest this night within my arms,  
And warm thee in their fold !  
Chill howls through hawthorn bush the  
wind :—  
My love is deadly cold."

"Let the wind howl through hawthorn  
bush !

This night we must away ;  
The steed is wight, the spur is bright ;  
I cannot stay till day."

"Busk, busk, and boune ! Thou mount'st  
behind  
Upon my black barb steed :  
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,  
We haste to bridal bed."

"To-night—to-night a hundred miles !—  
O dearest William, stay !  
The bell strikes twelve—dark, dismal  
hour !  
O, wait, my love, till day !"

"Look here, look here—the moon shines  
clear—  
Full fast I ween we ride :  
Mount and away ! for ere the day  
We reach our bridal bed.

"The black barb snorts, the bridle  
rings ;  
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee !  
The feast is made, the chamber spread,  
The bridal guests await thee."

Strong love prevailed : she busks, she  
bounes,  
She mounts the barb behind,  
And round her darling William's waist  
Her lily arms she twined.

And, hurry ! hurry ! off they rode,  
As fast as fast might be ;  
Spurned from the courser's thundering  
heels  
The flashing pebbles flee.

And on the right and on the left,  
Ere they could snatch a view,  
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and  
plain,  
And cot and castle flew.

"Sit fast—dost fear ?—The moon shines  
clear—  
Fleet goes my barb—keep hold !  
Fear'st thou ?"—"O no !" she faintly  
said ;  
"But why so stern and cold ?

"What yonder rings ? what yonder  
sings ?  
Why shrieks the owlet gray ?"  
"T is death-bell's clang, 't is funeral  
song,  
The body to the clay.

" With song and clang at morrow's  
dawn  
Ye may inter the dead :  
To-night I ride with my young bride  
To deck our bridal bed.

" Come with thy choir, thou coffined  
guest,  
To swell our nuptial song !  
Come, priest, to bless our marriage  
feast !  
Come all, come all along ! "

Ceased clang and song ; down sunk the  
bier ;  
The shrouded corpse arose :  
And hurry ! hurry ! all the train  
The thundering steed pursues.

And forward ! forward ! on they go ;  
High snorts the straining steed ;  
Thick pants the rider's laboring breath,  
As headlong on they speed.

" O William, why this savage haste !  
And where thy bridal bed ? "  
" 'Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,  
And narrow, trustless maid."

" No room for me ? "—" Enough for  
both ;—  
Speed, speed, my barb, thy course ! "  
O'er thundering bridge, through boiling  
surge,  
He drove the furious horse.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they  
rode,  
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;  
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,  
The flashing pebbles flee.

Fled past on right and left how fast  
Each forest, grove, and bower !  
On right and left fled past how fast  
Each city, town, and tower !

" Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines  
clear,  
Dost fear to ride with me ?—  
Hurrah ! hurrah ! the dead can ride ! "—  
" O William, let them be !—

" See there, see there ! What yonder  
swings  
And creaks, mid whistling rain ? "—  
" Gibbet and steel, the accursed wheel ;  
A murderer in his chain.—

" Hollo ! thou felon, follow here :  
To bridal bed we ride ;  
And thou shalt prance a fetter dance  
Before me and my bride."

And, hurry ! hurry ! clash, clash, clash !  
The wasted form descends ;  
And fleet as wind through hazel bush  
The wild career attends.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they  
rode,  
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;  
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,  
The flashing pebbles flee.

How fled what moonshine faintly  
showed !  
How fled what darkness hid !  
How fled the earth beneath their feet,  
The Heaven above their head !

" Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines  
clear,  
And well the dead can ride ;  
Dost, faithful Helen, fear for them ? "—  
" O leave in peace the dead ! "—

" Barb ! Barb ! methinks I hear the cock,  
The sand will soon be run :  
Barb ! Barb ! I smell the morning air ;  
The race is well-nigh done."

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they  
rode,  
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;  
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,  
The flashing pebbles flee.

" Hurrah ! hurrah ! well ride the dead ;  
The bride, the bride is come ;  
And soon we reach the bridal bed,  
For, Helen, here's my home."

Reluctant on its rusty hinge  
Revolved an iron door,  
And by the pale moon's setting beam  
Were seen a church and tower.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round  
The birds of midnight scared ;  
And rustling like autumnal leaves  
Unhallowed ghosts were heard.

O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale  
He spurred the fiery horse,  
Till suddenly at an open grave  
He checked the wondrous course.



The falling gauntlet quits the rein,  
Down drops the casque of steel,  
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,  
The spur his gory heel.

The eyes desert the naked skull,  
The mouldering flesh the bone,  
Till Helen's lily arms entwine  
A ghastly skeleton.

The furious barb snorts fire and foam,  
And with a fearful bound  
Dissolves at once in empty air,  
And leaves her on the ground.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,  
Pale spectres flit along,  
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,  
And howl the funeral song ;

"E'en when the heart's with anguish  
cleft  
Revere the doom of Heaven,  
Her soul is from her body reft ;  
Her spirit be forgiven !"

1795. 1796.

#### THE VIOLET

See Lockhart's life of Scott, Vol I, Chapter 8, and the Century Magazine, July, 1899.

The violet in her green-wood bower,  
Where birchen boughs with hazels  
mingle,  
May boast itself the fairest flower  
In glen or copse or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,  
Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclin-  
ing ;  
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,  
More sweet through watery lustre  
shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry  
Ere yet the day be past its morrow,  
Nor longer in my false love's eye  
Remained the tear of parting sorrow.  
1797. 1810.

#### TO A LADY

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL

TAKE these flowers which, purple wav-  
ing,  
On the ruined rampart grew,  
Where, the sons of freedom braving,  
Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger  
Pluck no longer laurels there ;  
They but yield the passing stranger  
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's  
hair. 1797.

#### THE EVE OF SAINT JOHN

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with  
day,  
He spurred his courser on,  
Without stop or stay, down the rocky  
way,  
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch  
His banner broad to rear ;  
He went not 'gainst the English yew  
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced and his  
helmet was laced,  
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore ;  
At his saddle-girth was a good steel  
sperthe,  
Full ten pound weight and more.

The baron returned in three days' space  
And his looks were sad and sour ;  
And weary was his courser's pace  
As he reached his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor  
Ran red with English blood ;  
Where the Douglas true and the bold  
Buccleuch  
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,  
His acton pierced and tore,  
His axe and his dagger with blood im-  
bued,—  
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,  
He held him close and still ;  
And he whistled thrice for his little  
foot-page,  
His name was English Will.

"Come thou hither, my little foot-page,  
Come hither to my knee ;  
Though thou art young and tender of  
age,  
I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,  
And look thou tell me true !  
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have  
been,  
What did thy lady do ?"

- " My lady, each night, sought the lonely light  
That burns on the wild Watchfold ;  
For from height to height the beacons bright  
Of the English foemen told.
- " The bittern clamored from the moss,  
The wind blew loud and shrill ;  
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross  
To the eiry Beacon Hill.
- " I watched her steps, and silent came  
Where she sat her on a stone ;—  
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,  
It burned all alone.
- " The second night I kept her in sight  
Till to the fire she came,  
And, by Mary's might ! an armed knight  
Stood by the lonely flame.
- " And many a word that warlike lord  
Did speak to my lady there ;  
But the rain fell fast and loud blew the blast,  
And I heard not what they were.
- " The third night there the sky was fair,  
And the mountain-blast was still,  
As again I watched the secret pair  
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.
- " And I heard her name the midnight hour,  
And name this holy eve ;  
And say, ' Come this night to thy lady's bower ;  
Ask no bold baron's leave.
- " ' He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch ;  
His lady is all alone ;  
The door she 'll undo to her knight so true  
On the eve of good Saint John.'
- " ' I cannot come ; I must not come ;  
I dare not come to thee :  
On the eve of Saint John I must wander alone ;  
In thy bower I may not be.'
- " ' Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight !  
Thou shouldst not say me nay ;  
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet  
Is worth the whole summer's day.
- " ' And I'll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall not sound,  
And rushes shall be strewed on the stair ;  
So, by the black rood-stone and by holy Saint John,  
I conjure thee, my love, to be there !'
- " ' Though the blood-hound be mute and the rush beneath my foot,  
And the warder his bugle should not blow,  
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,  
And my footstep he would know.'
- " ' O, fear not the priest who sleepeth to the east,  
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en ;  
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,  
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.'
- " He turned him around and grimly he frowned  
Then he laughed right scornfully—  
' He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that knight  
May as well say mass for me :
- " ' At the lone midnight hour when bad spirits have power  
In thy chamber will I be.—'  
With that he was gone and my lady left alone,  
And no more did I see."
- Then changed, I trow, was that bold baron's brow  
From the dark to the blood-red high ;  
" Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,  
For, by Mary, he shall die !"
- " His arms shone full bright in the beacon's red light ;  
His plume it was scarlet and blue ;  
On his shield was a hound in a silver leash bound,  
And his crest was a branch of the yew."
- " Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,  
Loud dost thou lie to me !  
For that knight is cold and low laid in mould,  
All under the Eildon-tree."

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord !  
For I heard her name his name ;  
And that lady bright, she called the  
knight  
Sir Richard of Coldinghame."

The bold baron's brow then changed, I  
trow,  
From high blood-red to pale—  
"The grave is deep and dark—and the  
corpse is stiff and stark—  
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy  
Melrose,  
And Eildon slopes to the plain,  
Full three nights ago by some secret foe  
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,  
And the wild winds drowned the  
name ;  
For the Dryburgh bells ring and the  
white monks do sing  
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame !"

He passed the court-gate and he oped the  
tower-gate,  
And he mounted the narrow stair  
To the bartizan-seat where, with maids  
that on her wait,  
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood ;  
Looked over hill and vale ;  
Over Tweed's fair flood and Mertoun's  
wood,  
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright !"  
"Now hail, thou baron true !  
What news, what news, from Ancram  
fight ?  
What news from the bold Buccleuch !"

"The Ancram moor is red with gore,  
For many a Southern fell ;  
And Buccleuch has charged us evermore  
To watch our beacons well."

The lady blushed red, but nothing she  
said :  
Nor added the baron a word :  
Then she stepped down the stair to her  
chamber fair,  
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the baron  
tossed and turned,  
And oft to himself he said,—

"The worms around him creep, and his  
bloody grave is deep—  
It cannot give up the dead !"

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,  
The night was well-nigh done,  
When a heavy sleep on that baron fell,  
On the eve of good Saint John.

The lady looked through the chamber  
fair,  
By the light of a dying flame ;  
And she was aware of a knight stood  
there—  
Sir Richard of Coldinghame !

"Alas ! away, away !" she cried,  
"For the holy Virgin's sake !"  
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side ;  
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon-tree for long nights three  
In bloody grave have I lain ;  
The mass and the death-prayer are said  
for me,  
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the baron's brand, near Tweed's fair  
strand,  
Most foully slain I fell ;  
And my restless sprite on the beacon's  
height  
For a space is doomed to dwell.

"At our trysting-place, for a certain  
space,  
I must wander to and fro ;  
But I had not had power to come to thy  
bower  
Hadst thou not conjured me so."

Love mastered fear—her brow she  
crossed ;  
"How, Richard, hast thou sped ?  
And art thou saved or art thou lost ?"  
The vision shook his head !

"Who spilleth life shall forfeit life ;  
So bid thy lord believe :  
That lawless love is guilt above,  
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam,  
His right upon her hand ;  
The lady shrunk and fainting sunk,  
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four  
Remains on that board impressed ;  
And forevermore that lady wore  
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower  
 Ne'er looks upon the sun ;  
 There is a monk in Melrose tower  
 He speaketh word to none.

That nun who ne'er beholds the day,  
 That monk who speaks to none—  
 That nun was Smaylho'me's lady gay,  
 That monk the bold baron.

1799. 1801.

### CADYOW CASTLE

WHEN princely Hamilton's abode  
 Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,  
 The song went round, the goblet flowed,  
 And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,  
 So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,  
 And echoed light the dancer's bound,  
 As mirth and music cheered the hall.

But Cadyow's towers in ruins laid,  
 And vaults by ivy mantled o'er,  
 Thrill to the music of the shade,  
 Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still of Cadyow's faded fame  
 You bid me tell a minstrel tale,  
 And tune my harp of Border frame  
 On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,  
 From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst  
 turn,

To draw oblivion's pall aside  
 And mark the long-forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid ! at thy command  
 Again the crumbled halls shall rise ;  
 Lo ! as on Evan's banks we stand,  
 The past returns—the present flies.

Where with the rock's wood-covered side  
 Were blended late the ruins green,  
 Rise turrets in fantastic pride  
 And feudal banners flaunt between :

Where the rude torrent's brawling course  
 Was shagged with thorn and tangling  
 sloe,  
 The ashler buttress braves its force  
 And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night—the shade of keep and spire  
 Obscurely dance on Evan's stream ;  
 And on the wave the warder's fire  
 Is checkering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light ; the east is gray ;  
 The weary warder leaves his tower ;  
 Steeds snort, uncoupled stag-hounds bay,  
 And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls—they hurry out—  
 Clatters each plank and swinging  
 chain,  
 As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout  
 Urge the shy steed and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the chief rode on ;  
 His shouting merry-men throng be-  
 hind ;  
 The steed of princely Hamilton  
 Was fleetlier than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks  
 bound,  
 The startled red-deer scuds the plain,  
 For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound  
 Has roused their mountain haunts  
 again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,  
 Whose limbs a thousand years have  
 worn,  
 What sullen roar comes down the gale  
 And drowns the hunter's pealing  
 horn ?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase  
 That roam in woody Caledon,  
 Crashing the forest in his race,  
 The Mountain Bull comes thundering  
 on.

Fierce on the hunter's quivered band  
 He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,  
 Spurs with black hoof and horn the  
 sand,  
 And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aimed well the chieftain's lance has  
 flown ;  
 Struggling in blood the savage lies ;  
 His roar is sunk in hollow groan—  
 Sound, merry huntsmen ! sound the  
 pryse !

'Tis noon—against the knotted oak  
 The hunters rest the idle spear ;  
 Curls through the trees the slender  
 smoke,  
 Where yeomen dight the woodland  
 cheer.

Proudly the chieftain marked his clan,  
 On greenwood lap all careless thrown,

Yet missed his eye the boldest man  
That bore the name of Hamilton.

"Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,  
Still wont our weal and woe to share?  
Why comes he not our sport to grace?  
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?"

Stern Claud replied with darkening  
face—

Gray Paisley's haughty lord was he—  
"At merry feast or buxom chase  
No more the warrior wilt thou see.

"Few suns have set since Woodhouselee  
Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets  
foam,  
When to his hearths in social glee  
The war-worn soldier turned him  
home.

"There, wan from her maternal throes,  
His Margaret, beautiful and mild,  
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,  
And peaceful nursed her new-born  
child.

"O change accursed! past are those days;  
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,  
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,  
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild  
Where mountain Eske through wood-  
land flows,  
Her arms enfold a shadowy child—  
O! is it she, the pallid rose?

"The wildered traveller sees her glide,  
And hears her feeble voice with awe—  
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's  
pride!  
And woe for injured Bothwell-  
haugh!'"

He ceased—and cries of rage and grief  
Burst mingling from the kindred band,  
And half arose the kindling chief,  
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.

But who o'er bush, o'er stream and rock,  
Rides headlong with resistless speed,  
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke  
Drives to the leap his jaded steed;

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs  
glare,  
As one some visioned sight that saw,

Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair?—  
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh.

From gory selle and reeling steed  
Sprung the fierce horseman with a  
bound,  
And, reeking from the recent deed,  
He dashed his carbine on the ground.

Sternly he spoke—"Tis sweet to hear  
In good greenwood the bugle blown,  
But sweeter to Revenge's ear  
To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

"Your slaughtered quarry proudly trode  
At dawning morn o'er dale and down,  
But prouder base-born Murray rode  
Through old Linlithgow's crowded  
town.

"From the wild Border's humbled side,  
In haughty triumph marched he,  
While Knox relaxed his bigot pride  
And smiled the traitorous pomp to see.

"But can stern Power, with all his vaunt,  
Or Pomp, with all her courtly glare,  
The settled heart of Vengeance daunt,  
Or change the purpose of Despair?

"With hackbut bent, my secret stand,  
Dark as the purposed deed, I chose,  
And marked where mingling in his band  
Trooped Scottish pipes and English  
bows.

"Dark Morton, girt with many a spear,  
Murder's foul minion, led the van;  
And clashed their broadswords in the  
rear  
The wild Macfarlanes' plaided clan.

"Glencairn and stout Parkhead were  
nigh,  
Obsequious at their Regent's rein,  
And haggard Lindesay's iron eye,  
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

"Mid pennoned spears, a steely grove,  
Proud Murray's plumage floated  
high;  
Scarce could his trampling charger move,  
So close the minions crowded nigh.

"From the raised vizor's shade his eye,  
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks along,  
And his steel truncheon, waved on high,  
Seemed marshalling the iron throng.



"But yet his saddened brow confessed  
A passing shade of doubt and awe;  
Some fiend was whispering in his breast,  
"Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!"

"The death-shot parts! the charger  
springs;  
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!  
And Murray's plumed helmet rings—  
Rings on the ground to rise no more.

"What joy the raptured youth can feel,  
To hear her love the loved one tell—  
Or he who broaches on his steel  
The wolf by whom his infant fell.

"But dearer to my injured eye  
To see in dust proud Murray roll;  
And mine was ten times trebled joy  
To hear him groan his felon soul.

"My Margaret's spectre glided near,  
With pride her bleeding victim saw,  
And shrieked in his death-deafened ear,  
'Remember injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"Then speed thee, noble Chatlerault!  
Spread to the wind thy bannered tree!  
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow—  
Murray is fallen and Scotland free!"

Vaults every warrior to his steed;  
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim—  
"Murray is fallen and Scotland freed!  
Couch, Arran, couch thy spear of  
flame!"

But see! the minstrel vision fails—  
The glimmering spears are seen no  
more;  
The shouts of war die on the gales,  
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar.

For the loud bugle pealing high,  
The blackbird whistles down the vale,  
And sunk in ivied ruins lie  
The bannered towers of Evandale.

For chiefs intent on bloody deed,  
And Vengeance shouting o'er the slain,  
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed,  
Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure own  
The maids who list the minstrel's tale;  
Nor e'er a ruder guest be known  
On the fair banks of Evandale!

1801. 1803.

## THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

O, LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,  
And lovers' ears in hearing;  
And love in life's extremity  
Can lend an hour of cheering.  
Disease had been in Mary's bower,  
And slow decay from mourning,  
Though now she sits on Neidpath's  
tower  
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,  
Her form decayed by pining,  
Till through her wasted hand at night  
You saw the taper shining;  
By fits, a sultry hectic hue  
Across her cheek was flying;  
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,  
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear  
Seemed in her frame residing;  
Before the watch-dog pricked his ear,  
She heard her lover's riding;  
Ere scarce a distant form was kenned,  
She knew, and waved to greet him;  
And o'er the battlement did bend,  
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he passed—an heedless gaze,  
As o'er some stranger glancing;  
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,  
Lost in his courser's prancing—  
The castle arch, whose hollow tone  
Returns each whisper spoken,  
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan  
Which told her heart was broken.

1806.

## HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,  
On the mountain dawns the day,  
All the jolly chase is here,  
With hawk and horse and hunting-  
spear!  
Hounds are in their couples yelling,  
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,  
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,  
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,  
The mist has left the mountain gray,  
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,  
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;  
And foresters have busy been  
To track the buck in thicket green;  
Now we come to chant our lay,  
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,  
To the green-wood haste away ;  
We can show you where he lies,  
Fleet of foot and tall of size ;  
We can show the marks he made,  
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed ;  
You shall see him brought to bay,  
" Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,  
Waken, lords and ladies gay !  
Tell them youth and mirth and glee  
Run a course as well as we ;  
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,  
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk ?  
Think of this and rise with day,  
Gentle lords and ladies gay. 1808.

## MARMION

### A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD

See Lockhart's Life of Scott, Vol. III, Chap. 16.

#### CANTO FIRST

##### THE CASTLE

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,  
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,  
And Cheviot's mountains lone ;  
The battled towers, the donjon keep,  
The loophole grates where captives  
weep,  
The flanking walls that round it sweep,  
In yellow lustre shone.  
The warriors on the turrets high,  
Moving athwart the evening sky,  
Seemed forms of giant height ;  
Their armor, as it caught the rays,  
Flashed back again the western blaze,  
In lines of dazzling light.

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,  
Now faded, as the fading ray  
Less bright, and less, was flung ;  
The evening gale had scarce the power  
To wave it on the donjon tower,  
So heavily it hung.  
The scouts had parted on their search,  
The castle gates were barred ;  
Above the gloomy portal arch,  
Timing his footsteps to a march,  
The warder kept his guard,  
Low humming, as he paced along,  
Some ancient Border gathering song.

A distant trampling sound he hears ;  
He looks abroad, and soon appears,  
O'er Horncliff-hill, a plump of spears  
Beneath a pennon gay :  
A horseman, darting from the crowd  
Like lightning from a summer cloud,  
Spurs on his nettled courser proud,  
Before the dark array.

Beneath the sable palisade  
That closed the castle barricade,  
His bugle-horn he blew ;  
The warder hastened from the wall,  
And warned the captain in the hall,  
For well the blast he knew ;  
And joyfully that knight did call  
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

" Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,  
Bring pasties of the doe,  
And quickly make the entrance free,  
And bid my heralds ready be,  
And every minstrel sound his glee,  
And all our trumpets blow ;  
And, from the platform, spare ye not  
To fire a noble salvo-shot ;  
Lord Marmion waits below !"  
Then to the castle's lower ward  
Sped forty yeomen tall,  
The iron-studded gates unbarred,  
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard.  
The lofty palisade unsparred,  
And let the drawbridge fall.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,  
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,  
His helm hung at the saddle bow ;  
Well by his visage you might know  
He was a stalworth knight and keen,  
And had in many a battle been ;  
The scar on his brown cheek revealed  
A token true of Bosworth field ;  
His eyebrow dark and eye of fire  
Showed spirit proud and prompt to ire,  
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek  
Did deep design and counsel speak.  
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,  
His thick moustache and curly hair,  
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,  
But more through toil than age,

His square-turned joints and strength of limb,  
 Showed him no carpet knight so trim,  
 But in close fight a champion grim,  
 In camps a leader sage.

Well was he armed from head to heel,  
 In mail and plate of Milan steel;  
 But his strong helm, of mighty cost,  
 Was all with burnished gold embossed.  
 Amid the plumage of the crest  
 A falcon hovered on her nest,  
 With wings outspread and forward  
 breast;

Even such a falcon, on his shield,  
 Soared sable in an azure field;  
 The golden legend bore aright,  
 "Who checks at me, to death is dight."  
 Blue was the charger's brodered rein;  
 Blue ribbons decked his arching mane;  
 The knightly housing's ample fold  
 Was velvet blue and trapped with gold.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,  
 Of noble name and knightly sires;  
 They burned the gilded spurs to claim,  
 For well could each a war-horse tame,  
 Could draw the bow, the sword could  
 sway,

And lightly bear the ring away;  
 Nor less with courteous precepts stored,  
 Could dance in hall, and carve at board,  
 And frame love-ditties passing rare,  
 And sing them to a lady fair.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,  
 With halbert, bill, and battle-axe;  
 They bore Lord Marmion's lance so  
 strong

And led his sumpter-mules along,  
 And ambling palfrey, when at need  
 Him listed ease his battle-steed.  
 The last and trustiest of the four  
 On high his forked pennon bore;  
 Like swallow's tail in shape and hue,  
 Flattered the streamer glossy blue,  
 Where, blazoned sable, as before,  
 The towering falcon seemed to soar.  
 Last, twenty yeomen, two and two  
 In hose black and jerkins blue,  
 With falcons brodered on each breast,  
 Attended on their lord's behest.  
 Each, chosen for an archer good,  
 Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;  
 Each one a six-foot bow could bend,  
 And far a cloth-yard shaft could send;  
 Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,  
 And at their belts their quivers rung.  
 Their dusty palfreys and array  
 Showed they had marched a weary way.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,  
 How fairly armed, and ordered how,  
 The soldiers of the guard,  
 With musket, pike, and morion,  
 To welcome noble Marmion,  
 Stood in the castle-yard;  
 Minstrels and trumpeters were there,  
 The gunner held his linstock yare,  
 For welcome-shot prepared:  
 Entered the train, and such a clang  
 As then through all his turrets rang  
 Old Norham never heard.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,  
 The trumpets flourished brave,  
 The cannon from the ramparts glanced,  
 And thundering welcome gave.  
 A blithe salute, in martial sort,  
 The minstrels well might sound,  
 For, as Lord Marmion crossed the court,  
 He scattered angels round.  
 "Welcome to Norham, Marmion!  
 Stout heart and open hand!  
 Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,  
 Thou flower of English land!"

Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,  
 With silver scutcheon round their neck,  
 Stood on the steps of stone  
 By which you reach the donjon gate,  
 And there, with herald pomp and state,  
 They hailed Lord Marmion:  
 They hailed him Lord of Fontenaye,  
 Of Lutterward, and Scivelbaye,  
 Of Tamworth tower and town;  
 And he, their courtesy to requite,  
 Gave them a chain of twelve marks  
 weight,  
 All as he lighted down.  
 "Now, largesse, largesse, Lord Marmion,  
 Knight of the crest of gold!  
 A blazoned shield, in battle won,  
 Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

They marshalled him to the castle-hall,  
 Where the guests stood all aside,  
 And loudly flourished the trumpet-call,  
 And the heralds loudly cried,—  
 "Room, lordlings, room for Lord Mar-  
 mion,  
 With the crest and helm of gold!  
 Full well we know the trophies won  
 In the lists at Cottiswold;  
 There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove  
 'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;  
 To him he lost his lady-love,  
 And to the king his land.  
 Ourselves beheld the listed field,  
 A sight both sad and fair;



We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,  
And saw his saddle bare ;  
We saw the victor win the crest  
He wears with worthy pride,  
And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,  
His foeman's scutcheon tied.  
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight !  
Room, room, ye gentles gay.  
For him who conquered in the right,  
Marmion of Fontenaye ! ”

Then stepped, to meet that noble lord,  
Sir Hugh the Heron bold,  
Baron of Twisell and of Ford,  
And Captain of the Hold ;  
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,  
Rais'd o'er the pavement high.  
And placed him in the upper place—  
They feasted full and high :  
The whiles a Northern harper rude  
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,  
“ How the fierce Thirwalls, and Rid-  
leys all,  
Stout Willimondswick,  
And Hardriding Dick,  
And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o'  
the Wall,  
Have set on Sir Albany Featherston-  
haugh,  
And taken his life at the Dead-man's-  
shaw.”  
Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could  
brook  
The harper's barbarous lay,  
Yet much he praised the pains he took,  
And well those pains did pay ;  
For lady's suit and minstrel's strain  
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

“ Now good Lord Marmion,” Heron says,  
“ Of your fair courtesy,  
I pray you bide some little space  
In this poor tower with me.  
Here may you keep your arms from rust,  
May breathe your war-horse well ;  
Seldom hath passed a week but joust  
Or feat of arms befell.  
The Scots can rein a mettled steed,  
And love to couch a spear ;—  
Saint George ! a stirring life they lead  
That have such neighbors near !  
Then stay with us a little space,  
Our Northern wars to learn ;  
I pray you for your lady's grace ! ”  
Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

The Captain marked his altered look,  
And gave the squire the sign ;  
A mighty wassail-bowl he took,

And crowned it high with wine.  
“ Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion ;  
But first I pray thee fair,  
Where hast thou left that page of thine  
That used to serve thy cup of wine,  
Whose beauty was so rare ?  
When last in Raby-towers we met,  
The boy I closely eyed,  
And often marked his cheeks were wet  
With tears he fain would hide.  
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,  
To burnish shield or sharpen brand,  
Or saddle battle-steed.  
But meeter seemed for lady fair,  
To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,  
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,  
The slender silk to lead :  
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,  
His bosom—when he sighed,  
The russet doublet's rugged fold  
Could scarce repel its pride !  
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth  
To serve in lady's bower ?  
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,  
A gentle paramour ? ”

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest ;  
He rolled his kindling eye,  
With pain his rising wrath suppressed,  
Yet made a calm reply ;  
“ That boy thou thought so goodly fair,  
He might not brook the Northern air.  
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,  
I left him sick in Lindisfarne.  
Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,  
Why does thy lovely lady gay  
Disdain to grace the hall to-day ?  
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,  
Gone on some pious pilgrimage ? ”—  
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame  
Whispered light tales of Heron's dame.

Unmarked, at least unrecked, the taunt,  
Careless the knight replied :  
“ No bird whose feathers gaily flaunt  
Delights in cage to bide ;  
Norham is grim and grated close,  
Hemmed in by battlement and fosse,  
And many a darksome tower,  
And better loves my lady bright  
To sit in liberty and light  
In fair Queen Margaret's bower.  
We hold our greyhound in our hand,  
Our falcon on our glove,  
But where shall we find leash or band  
For dame that loves to rove ?  
Let the wild falcon soar her swing.  
She 'll stoop when she has tried her  
wing.”—

"Nay, if with Royal James's bride  
The lovely Lady Heron bide,  
Behold me here a messenger,  
Your tender greetings prompt to bear ;  
For, to the Scottish court addressed,  
I journey at our king's behest,  
And pray you, of your grace, provide  
For me and mine a trusty guide.  
I have not ridden in Scotland since  
James backed the cause of that mock  
prince,

Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,  
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.  
Then did I march with Surrey's power,  
What time we razed old Ayton tower."—

"For such-like need, my lord, I trow,  
Norham can find you guides enow ;  
For here be some have pricked as far  
On Scottish grounds as to Dunbar,  
Have drunk the monks of Saint  
Bethan's ale,  
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale,  
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,  
And given them light to set their  
hoods."

"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion  
cried,

"Were I in warlike-wise to ride,  
A better guard I would not lack  
Than your stout forayers at my back ;  
But as in form of peace I go,  
A friendly messenger, to know,  
Why, through all Scotland, near and  
far,

Their king is mustering troops for war,  
The sight of plundering Border spears  
Might justify suspicious fears,  
And deadly feud or thirst of spoil  
Break out in some unseemly broil.  
A herald were my fitting guide ;  
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide ;  
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,  
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

The Captain mused a little space,  
And passed his hand across his face.—  
"Fain would I find the guide you want,  
But ill may spare a pursuivant,  
The only men that safe can ride  
Mine errands on the Scottish side :  
And though a bishop built this fort,  
Few holy brethren here resort ;  
Even our good chaplain, as I ween,  
Since our last siege we have not seen,  
The mass he might not sing or say  
Upon one stinted meal a day ;  
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,

And prayed for our success the while.  
Our Norham vicar, woe betide,  
Is all too well in case to ride ;  
The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein  
The wildest war-horse in your train,  
But then no spearman in the hall  
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.  
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man ;  
A blithesome brother at the can,  
A welcome guest in hall and bower,  
He knows each castle, town, and tower,  
In which the wine and ale is good,  
Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.  
But that good man, as ill befalls,  
Hath seldom left our castle walls,  
Since, on the vigil of Saint Bede,  
In evil hour he crossed the Tweed,  
To teach Dame Alison her creed.  
Old Bughrig found him with his wife,  
And John, an enemy to strife,  
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.  
The jealous churl hath deeply sworn  
That, if again he venture o'er  
He shall shrieve penitent no more.  
Little he loves such risks, I know,  
Yet in your guard perchance will go."

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,  
Carved to his uncle and that lord,  
And reverently took up the word :  
"Kind uncle, woe were we each one,  
If harm should hap to brother John.  
He is a man of mirthful speech,  
Can many a game and gambol teach ;  
Full well at tables can he play,  
And sweep at bowls the stake away.  
None can a lustier carol bawl,  
The needfullest among us all,  
When time hangs heavy in the hall,  
And snow comes thick at Christmas  
tide,

And we can neither hunt nor ride  
A foray on the Scottish side.  
The vowed revenge of Bughrig rude  
May end in worse than loss of hood,  
Let friar John in safety still  
In chimney-corner snore his fill,  
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill ;  
Last night, to Norham there came one  
Will better guide Lord Marmion."—  
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,  
Well hast thou spoke ; say forth thy  
say."

"Here is a holy Palmer come,  
From Salem first, and last from Rome ;  
One that hath kissed the blessed tomb,  
And visited each holy shrine  
In Araby and Palestine ;

On hills of Armenie hath been,  
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen ;  
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,  
Which parted at the Prophet's rod ;  
In Sinai's wilderness he saw  
The Mount where Israel heard the law,  
Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,  
And shadows, mists, and darkness,  
given.

He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,  
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell ;  
And of that Grot where Olives nod,  
Where, darling of each heart and eye,  
From all the youth of Sicily,  
Saint Rosalie retired to God.

"To stout Saint George of Norwich  
merry,  
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,  
Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,  
For his sins' pardon hath he prayed.  
He knows the passes of the North,  
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth ;  
Little he eats, and long will wake,  
And drinks but of the stream or lake.  
This were a guide o'er moor and dale ;  
But when our John hath quaffed his ale,  
As little as the wind that blows,  
And warms itself against his nose,  
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."—

"Gramercy !" quoth Lord Marmion,  
"Full loath were I that Friar John,  
That venerable man, for me  
Were placed in fear or jeopardy :  
If this same Palmer will me lead  
From hence to Holy-Rood,  
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,  
Instead of cockle-shell or bead,  
With angels fair and good.  
I love such holy rambles ; still  
They know to charm a weary hill  
With song, romance, or lay :  
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,  
Some lying legend, at the least,  
They bring to cheer the way."—

"Ah ! noble sir," young Selby said,  
And finger on his lip he laid,  
"This man knows much, perchance e'en  
more  
Than he could learn by holy lore.  
Still to himself he's muttering,  
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.  
Last night we listened at his cell ;  
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to  
tell,  
He murmured on till morn. howe'er  
No living mortal could be near.

Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,  
As other voices spoke again.  
I cannot tell—I like it not—  
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,  
No conscience clear and void of wrong  
Can rest awake and pray so long.  
Himself still sleeps before his beads  
Have marked ten aves and two  
creeds."—

"Let pass," quoth Marmion ; "by my  
fay,  
This man shall guide me on my way,  
Although the great arch-fiend and he  
Had sworn themselves of company.  
So please you, gentle youth, to call  
This Palmer to the castle-hall."  
The summoned Palmer came in place :  
His sable cowl o'erhung his face ;  
In his black mantle was he clad,  
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,  
On his broad shoulders wrought ;  
The scallop shell his cap did deck ;  
The crucifix around his neck  
Was from Loretto brought ;  
His sandals were with travel tore.  
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore ;  
The faded palm-branch in his hand  
Showed pilgrim from the Holy Land.

When as the Palmer came in hall,  
Nor lord nor knight was there more tall,  
Or had a statelier step withal,  
Or looked more high and keen ;  
For no saluting did he wait,  
But strode across the hall of state,  
And fronted Marmion where he sat,  
As he his peer had been.  
But his gaunt frame was worn with  
toil ;  
His cheek was sunk, alas the while !  
And when he struggled at a smile  
His eye looked haggard wild :  
Poor wretch, the mother that him bare,  
If she had been in presence there,  
In his wan face and sunburnt hair  
She had not known her child.  
Danger, long travel, want, or woe,  
Soon change the form that best we  
know—  
For deadly fear can time outgo,  
And blanch at once the hair ;  
Hard toil can roughen form and face,  
And want can quench the eye's bright  
grace,  
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace  
More deeply than despair.  
Happy whom none of these befall,  
But this poor Palmer knew them all.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask ;  
 The Palmer took on him the task,  
 So he would march with morning tide,  
 To Scottish court to be his guide.  
 " But I have solemn vows to pay,  
 And may not linger by the way,  
 To fair Saint Andrew's bound,  
 Within the ocean-cave to pray,  
 Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,  
 From midnight to the dawn of day,  
 Sung to the billows' sound ;  
 Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,  
 Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel  
 And the crazed brain restore.  
 Saint Mary grant that cave or spring  
 Could back to peace my bosom bring,  
 Or bid it throb no more ! "

And now the midnight draught of sleep,  
 Where wine and spices richly steep,  
 In massive bowl of silver deep,  
 The page presents on knee.  
 Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,  
 The Captain pledged his noble guest,  
 The cup went through among the rest,  
 Who drained it merrily ;  
 Alone the Palmer passed it by,  
 Though Selby pressed him courteously.  
 This was a sign the feast was o'er ;  
 It hushed the merry wassail roar,  
 The minstrels ceased to sound.  
 Soon in the castle nought was heard  
 But the slow footstep of the guard  
 Pacing his sober round.

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose :  
 And first the chapel doors unclosed ;  
 Then, after morning rites were done—  
 A hasty mass from Friar John—  
 And knight and squire had broke their  
 fast  
 On rich substantial repast,  
 Lord Marmion's bugle blew to horse.  
 Then came the stirrup-cup in course :  
 Between the baron and his host,  
 No point of courtesy was lost ;  
 High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,  
 Solemn excuse the Captain made,  
 Till, filing from the gate, had passed  
 That noble train, their lord the last.  
 Then loudly rung the trumpet call ;  
 Thundered the cannon from the wall,  
 And shook the Scottish shore ;  
 Around the castle eddied slow  
 Volumes of smoke as white as snow  
 And hid its turrets hoar,  
 Till they rolled forth upon the air,  
 And met the river breezes there,  
 Which gave again the prospect fair.

## CANTO SECOND

## THE CONVENT

THE breeze which swept away the smoke  
 Round Norham Castle rolled,  
 When all the loud artillery spoke  
 With lightning-flash and thunder-stroke,  
 As Marmion left the Hold.—  
 It curled not Tweed alone, that breeze,  
 For, far upon Northumbrian seas,  
 It freshly blew and strong.  
 Where, from high Whitby's cloistered  
 pile,  
 Bound to Saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle,  
 It bore a bark along.  
 Upon the gale she stooped her side,  
 And bounded o'er the swelling tide,  
 As she were dancing home ;  
 The merry seamen laughed to see  
 Their gallant ship so lustily  
 Furrōw the green sea-foam.  
 Much joyed they in their honored  
 freight ;  
 For, on the deck, in chair of state,  
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed.  
 With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

" 'T was sweet to see these holy maids,  
 Like birds escaped to greenwood shades,  
 Their first flight from the cage,  
 How timid, and how curious too,  
 For all to them was strange and new,  
 And all the common sights they view  
 Their wonderment engage.  
 One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,  
 With many a benedictite ;  
 One at the rippling surge grew pale,  
 And would for terror pray,  
 Then shrieked because the sea-dog nigh  
 His round black head and sparkling eye  
 Reared o'er the foaming spray ;  
 And one would still adjust her veil  
 Disordered by the summer gale,  
 Perchance lest some more worldly eye  
 Her dedicated charms might spy,  
 Perchance because such action graced  
 Her fair-turned arm and slender waist.  
 Light was each simple bosom there,  
 Save two, who ill might pleasure share,—  
 The Abbess and the Novice Clare.

The Abbess was of noble blood,  
 But early took the veil and hood,  
 Ere upon life she cast a look,  
 Or knew the world that she forsook.  
 Fair too she was, and kind had been  
 As she was fair, but ne'er had seen  
 For her a timid lover sigh,  
 Nor knew the influence of her eye.

Love to her ear was but a name,  
 Combined with vanity and shame ;  
 Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all  
 Bounded within the cloister wall ;  
 The deadliest sin her mind could reach  
 Was of monastic rule the breach,  
 And her ambition's highest aim  
 To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.  
 For this she gave her ample dower  
 To raise the convent's eastern tower ;  
 For this, with carving rare and quaint,  
 She decked the chapel of the saint,  
 And gave the relic-shrine of cost,  
 With ivory and gems embossed.  
 The poor her convent's bounty blest,  
 The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule  
 Reformed on Benedictine school ;  
 Her cheek was pale, her form was spare ;  
 Vigils and penitence austere  
 Had early quenched the light of youth :  
 But gentle was the dame, in sooth ;  
 Though, vain of her religious sway,  
 She loved to see her maids obey.  
 Yet nothing stern was she in cell,  
 And the nuns loved their Abbess well.  
 Sad was this voyage to the dame ;  
 Summoned to Lindisfarne, she came,  
 There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old  
 And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold  
 A chapter of Saint Benedict,  
 For inquisition stern and strict  
 On two apostates from the faith,  
 And, if need were, to doom to death.

Nought say I here of Sister Clare,  
 Save this, that she was young and fair ;  
 As yet a novice unprofessed,  
 Lovely and gentle, but distressed,  
 She was betrothed to one now dead,  
 Or worse, who had dishonored fled.  
 Her kinsmen bade her give her hand  
 To one who loved her for her land ;  
 Herself, almost heart-broken now,  
 Was bent to take the vestal vow,  
 And shroud within Saint Hilda's gloom  
 Her blasted hopes and withered bloom.

She sate upon the galley's prow,  
 And seemed to mark the waves below ;  
 Nay, seemed, so fixed her look and eye,  
 To count them as they glided by :  
 She saw them not—'t was seeming all—  
 Far other scene her thoughts recall—  
 A sun-scorched desert, waste and bare ;  
 Nor waves nor breezes murmured there :  
 There saw she where some careless hand  
 O'er a dead corpse had heaped the sand,

To hide it till the jackals come  
 To tear it from the scanty tomb.—  
 See what a woful look was given,  
 As she raised up her eyes to heaven !

Lovely, and gentle, and distressed—  
 These charms might tame the fiercest  
 breast :

Harpers have sung and poets told  
 That he, in fury uncontrolled,  
 The shaggy monarch of the wood,  
 Before a virgin, fair and good,  
 Hath pacified his savage mood.  
 But passions in the human frame  
 Oft put the lion's rage to shame ;  
 And jealousy, by dark intrigue,  
 With sordid avarice in league,  
 Had practised with their bow and knife  
 Against the mourner's harmless life.  
 This crime was charged gainst those  
 who lay  
 Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet gray.

And now the vessel skirts the strand  
 Of mountainous Northumberland ;  
 Towns, towers, and halls successive rise,  
 And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.  
 Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,  
 And Tynemouth's priory and bay :  
 They marked amid her trees the hall  
 Of lofty Seaton-Delaval ;  
 They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck  
 floods  
 Rush to the sea through sounding  
 woods ;

They passed the tower of Widderington,  
 Mother of many a valiant son ;  
 At Coquet-isle their beads they tell  
 To the good saint who owned the cell ;  
 Then did the Alne attention claim,  
 And Warkworth, proud of Percy's  
 name ;  
 And next they crossed themselves to  
 hear

The whitening breakers sound so near,  
 Where, boiling through the rocks, they  
 roar

On Dunstanborough's caverned shore ;  
 Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked  
 they there,

King Ida's castle, huge and square,  
 From its tall rock look grimly down,  
 And on the swelling ocean frown ;  
 Then from the coast they bore away,  
 And reached the Holy Island's bay.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,  
 And girdled in the Saint's domain ;  
 For, with the flow and ebb, its style

Varies from continent to isle :  
 Dry shod, o'er sands, twice every day  
 The pilgrims to the shrine find way ;  
 Twice every day the waves efface  
 Of staves and sandalled feet the trace.  
 As to the port the galley flew,  
 Higher and higher rose to view  
 The castle with its battled walls,  
 The ancient monastery's halls,  
 A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,  
 Placed on the margin of the isle.

In Saxon strength that abbey frowned,  
 With massive arches broad and round,  
 That rose alternate, row and row,  
 On ponderous columns, short and low,  
 Built ere the art was known,  
 By pointed aisle and shafted stalk  
 The arcades of an alleys walk  
 To emulate in stone.

On the deep walls the heathen Dane  
 Had poured his impious rage in vain :  
 And needful was such strength to these,  
 Exposed to the tempestuous seas,  
 Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,  
 Open to rovers fierce as they,  
 Which could twelve hundred years with-  
 stand

Winds, waves, and northern pirates'  
 hand.

Not but that portions of the pile,  
 Rebuilt in a later style,  
 Showed where the spoiler's hand had  
 been ;

Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen  
 Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,  
 And mouldered in his niche the saint,  
 And rounded with consuming power  
 The pointed angles of each tower ;  
 Yet still entire the abbey stood,  
 Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

Soon as they neared his turrets strong,  
 The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,  
 And with the sea-wave and the wind  
 Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined  
 And made harmonious close ;

Then, answering from the sandy shore,  
 Half-drowned amid the breakers' roar,

According chorus rose :  
 Down to the haven of the Isle

The monks and nuns in order file

From Cuthbert's cloisters grim ;

Banner, and cross, and relics there.

To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare ;

And, as they caught the sounds on air,

They echoed back the hymn.

The islanders in joyous mood

Rushed emulously through the flood

To hale the bark to land :  
 Conspicuous by her veil and hood,  
 Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,  
 And blessed them with her hand.

Suppose we now the welcome said,  
 Suppose the convent banquet made :

All through the holy dome,  
 Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,  
 Wherever vestal maid might pry,  
 Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,

The stranger sisters roam ;  
 Till fell the evening damp with dew,  
 And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,  
 For there even summer night is chill.  
 Then, having strayed and gazed their fill,

They closed around the fire ;  
 And all, in turn, essayed to paint  
 The rival merits of their saint,

A theme that ne'er can tire  
 A holy maid, for be it known  
 That their saint's honor is their own.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told  
 How to their house three barons bold

Must menial service do,  
 While horns blow out a note of shame,  
 And monks cry, " Fie upon your name !  
 In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,

Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."—  
 " This, on Ascension-day, each year  
 While laboring on our harbor-pier,  
 Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."  
 They told how in their convent-cell  
 A Saxon princess once did dwell,

The lovely Edelfled ;  
 And how, of thousand snakes, each one  
 Was changed into a coil of stone

When holy Hilda prayed :  
 Themselves, within their holy bound,  
 Their stony folds had often found.  
 They told how sea-fowls' pinions fail  
 As over Whitby's towers they sail,  
 And, sinking down, with flutterings  
 faint.

They do their homage to the saint.

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail  
 To vie with these in holy tale ;  
 His body's resting-place, of old,  
 How oft their patron changed, they told ;  
 How, when the rude Dane burned their  
 pile,

The monks fled forth from Holy Isle ;  
 O'er northern mountain, marsh, and  
 moor,

From sea to sea, from shore to shore,  
 Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they  
 bore.

They rested them in fair Melrose ;  
 But though, alive, he loved it well,  
 Not there his relics might repose ;  
 For, wondrous tale to tell !  
 In his stone coffin forth he rides,  
 A ponderous bark for river tides,  
 Yet light as gossamer it glides  
 Downward to Tilmouth cell.  
 Nor long was his abiding there,  
 For southward did the saint repair ;  
 Chester-le-Street and Ripon saw  
 His holy corpse ere Wardilaw  
 Hailed him with joy and fear ;  
 And, after many wanderings past,  
 He chose his lordly seat at last  
 Where his cathedral, huge and vast,  
 Looks down upon the Wear.  
 There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,  
 His relics are in secret laid ;  
 But none may know the place,  
 Save of his holiest servants three,  
 Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,  
 Who share that wondrous grace.

Who may his miracles declare ?  
 Even Scotland's dauntless king and  
 heir—

Although with them they led  
 Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,  
 And Loden's knights, all sheathed in  
 mail,

And the bold men of Teviotdale—  
 Before his standard fled.  
 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,  
 Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,  
 And turned the Conqueror back again,  
 When, with his Norman bowyer band,  
 He came to waste Northumberland.

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn  
 If on a rock, by Lindisfarne,  
 Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame  
 The sea-born beads that bear his name :  
 Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,  
 And said they might his shape behold,  
 And hear his anvil sound ;  
 A deadened clang,—a huge dim form,  
 Seen but, and heard, when gathering  
 storm

And night were closing round.  
 But this, as tale of idle fame,  
 The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

While round the fire such legends go,  
 Far different was the scene of woe  
 Where, in a secret aisle beneath,  
 Council was held of life and death.

It was more dark and long, that vault,  
 Than the worst dungeon cell ;

Old Colwulf built it, for his fault  
 In penitence to dwell,  
 When he for cowl and beads laid  
 down

The Saxon battle-axe and crown.  
 This den, which, chilling every sense  
 Of feeling, hearing, sight,  
 Was called the Vault of Penitence,  
 Excluding air and light,  
 Was by the prelate Sexhelm made  
 A place of burial for such dead  
 As, having died in mortal sin,  
 Might not be laid the church within.  
 'Twas now a place of punishment ;  
 Whence if so loud a shriek were sent  
 As reached the upper air,  
 The hearers blessed themselves, and said  
 The spirits of the sinful dead  
 Bemoaned their torments there.

But though, in the monastic pile,  
 Did of this penitential pile,  
 Some vague tradition go,  
 Few only, save the Abbot, knew  
 Where the place lay, and still more few  
 Were those who had from him the clew  
 To that dread vault to go.  
 Victim and executioner  
 Were blindfold when transported there.  
 In low dark rounds the arches hung,  
 From the rude rock the side-walls sprung  
 The gravestones, rudely sculptured o'er,  
 Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,  
 Were all the pavement of the floor ;  
 The mildew drops fell one by one,  
 With tinkling splash, upon the stone.  
 A cresset, in an iron chain,  
 Which served to light this drear domain,  
 With damp and darkness seemed to  
 strive,  
 As if it scarce might keep alive ;  
 And yet it dimly served to show  
 The awful conclave met below.

There, met to doom in secrecy,  
 Were placed the heads of convents three,  
 All servants of Saint Benedict.  
 The statutes of whose order strict  
 On iron table lay ;  
 In long black dress, on seats of stone,  
 Behind were these three judges shown  
 By the pale crescent's ray.  
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda's there  
 Sat for a space with visage bare,  
 Until, to hide her bosom's swell,  
 And tear-drops that for pity fell,  
 She closely drew her veil ;  
 Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,  
 By her proud mien and flowing dress,

Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,  
 And she with awe looks pale;  
 And he, that ancient man, whose sight  
 Has long been quenched by age's night,  
 Upon whose wrinkled brow alone  
 Nor ruth nor mercy's trace is shown,  
 Whose look is hard and stern.—  
 Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style,  
 For sanctity called through the isle  
 The Saint of Lindisfarne.

Before them stood a guilty pair;  
 But, though an equal fate they share,  
 Yet one alone deserves our care.  
 Her sex a page's dress belied;  
 The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,  
 Obscured her charms, but could not  
 hide.

Her cap down o'er her face she drew;  
 And, on her doublet breast,  
 She tried to hide the badge of blue,  
 Lord Marmion's falcon crest.  
 But, at the prioress' command,  
 A monk undid the silken band  
 That tied her tresses fair,  
 And raised the bonnet from her head,  
 And down her slender form they spread  
 In ringlets rich and rare.  
 Constance de Beverley they know,  
 Sister professed of Fontevraud,  
 Whom the Church numbered with the  
 dead,  
 For broken vows and convent fled.

When thus her face was given to  
 view,—  
 Although so pallid was her hue,  
 It did a ghastly contrast bear  
 To those bright ringlets glistening  
 fair,—  
 Her look composed, and steady eye,  
 Bespoke a matchless constancy;  
 And there she stood so calm and pale  
 That, but her breathing did not fail,  
 And motion slight of eye and head,  
 And of her bosom, warranted  
 That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,  
 You might have thought a form of wax,  
 Wrought to the very life, was there;  
 So still she was, so pale, so fair.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,  
 Such as does murder for a meed;  
 Who, but of fear, knows no control,  
 Because his conscience, seared and foul,  
 Feels not the import of his deed;  
 One whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires  
 Beyond his own more brute desires.  
 Such tools the Tempter ever needs

To do the savagest of deeds;  
 For them no visioned terrors daunt,  
 Their nights no fancied spectres haunt;  
 One fear with them, of all most base,  
 The fear of death, alone finds place.  
 This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,  
 And shamed not loud to moan and howl,  
 His body on the floor to dash,  
 And crouch, like hound beneath the  
 lash;  
 While his mute partner, standing near,  
 Waited her doom without a tear.

Yet well the luckless wretch might  
 shriek,  
 Well might her paleness terror speak!  
 For there were seen in that dark wall  
 Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall;—  
 Who enters at such grisly door  
 Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.  
 In each a slender meal was laid,  
 Of roots, of water, and of bread;  
 By each, in Benedictine dress,  
 Two haggard monks stood motionless,  
 Who, holding high a blazing torch,  
 Showed the grim entrance of the porch;  
 Reflecting back the smoky beam,  
 The dark-red walls and arches gleam.  
 Hewn stones and cement were dis-  
 played,  
 And building tools in order laid.

These executioners were chose,  
 As men who were with mankind foes,  
 And, with despite and envy fired,  
 Into the cloister had retired,  
 Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,  
 Strove by deep penance to efface  
 Of some foul crime the stain;  
 For, as the vassals of her will,  
 Such men the Church selected still  
 As either joyed in doing ill,  
 Or thought more grace to gain  
 If in her cause they wrestled down  
 Feelings their nature strove to own.  
 By strange device were they brought  
 there,  
 They knew not how, and knew not  
 where.

And now that blind old abbot rose,  
 To speak the Chapter's doom  
 On those the wall was to enclose  
 Alive within the tomb,  
 But stopped because that woful maid,  
 Gathering her powers, to speak essayed;  
 Twice she essayed, and twice in vain.  
 Her accents might no utterance gain;  
 Nought but imperfect murmurs slip



From her convulsed and quivering lip ;  
 'Twixt each attempt all was so still,  
 You seemed to hear a distant rill—  
 'T was ocean's swells and falls ;  
 For though this vault of sin and fear  
 Was to the sounding surge so near,  
 A tempest there you scarce could hear,  
 So massive were the walls.

At length, an effort sent apart  
 The blood that curdled to her heart,  
 And light came to her eye,  
 And color dawned upon her cheek,  
 A hectic and a fluttered streak,  
 Like that left on the Cheviot peak  
 By Autumn's stormy sky ;  
 And when her silence broke at length,  
 Still as she spoke she gathered strength,  
 And armed herself to bear.  
 It was a fearful sight to see  
 Such high resolve and constancy  
 In form so soft and fair.

"I speak not to implore your grace,  
 Well know I for one minute's space  
 Successless might I sue :  
 Nor do I speak your prayers to gain ;  
 For if a death of lingering pain  
 To cleanse my sins be penance vain,  
 Vain are your masses too.—  
 I listened to a traitor's tale,  
 I left the convent and the veil ;  
 For three long years I bowed my pride,  
 A horse-boy in his train to ride ;  
 And well my folly's meed he gave,  
 Who forfeited, to be his slave,  
 All here, and all beyond the grave.  
 He saw young Clara's face more fair,  
 He knew her of broad lands the heir,  
 Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,  
 And Constance was beloved no more.  
 'T is an old tale, and often told ;  
 But did my fate and wish agree,  
 Ne'er had been read, in story old,  
 Of maiden true betrayed for gold,  
 That loved, or was avenged, like me !

"The king approved his favorite's aim ;  
 In vain a rival barred his claim.  
 Whose fate with Clare's was plight,  
 For he attains that rival's fame  
 With treason's charge—and on they came  
 In mortal lists to fight.  
 Their oaths are said,  
 Their prayers are prayed,  
 Their lances in the rest are laid,  
 They meet in mortal shock ;  
 And hark ! the throng, with thundering  
 cry,

Shout 'Marmion, Marmion ! to the sky,  
 De Wilton to the block !'  
 Say, ye who preach Heaven shall decide  
 When in the lists two champions ride,  
 Say, was Heaven's justice here ?  
 When, loyal in his love and faith,  
 Wilton found overthrow or death  
 Beneath a traitor's spear ?  
 How false the charge, how true he fell,  
 This guilty packet best can tell."  
 Then drew a packet from her breast,  
 Paused, gathered voice, and spoke the  
 rest.

"Still was false Marmion's bridal stayed ;  
 To Whitby's convent fled the maid,  
 The hated match to shun.  
 'Ho ! shifts she thus ?' King Henry  
 cried,  
 'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,  
 If she were sworn a nun.'  
 One way remained—the king's command  
 Sent Marmion to the Scottish land ;  
 I lingered here, and rescue planned  
 For Clara and for me :  
 This caitiff monk for gold did swear  
 He would to Whitby's shrine repair,  
 And by his drugs my rival fair  
 A saint in heaven should be ;  
 But ill the dastard kept his oath,  
 Whose cowardice hath undone us both.

"And now my tongue the secret tells,  
 Not that remorse my bosom swells,  
 But to assure my soul that none  
 Shall ever wed with Marmion.  
 Had fortune my last hope betrayed,  
 This packet, to the king conveyed,  
 Had given him to the headsman's stroke,  
 Although my heart that instant broke.—  
 Now, men of death, work forth your  
 will,  
 For I can suffer, and be still ;  
 And come he slow, or come he fast,  
 It is but Death who comes at last.

"Yet dread me from my living tomb,  
 Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome !  
 If Marmion's late remorse should wake,  
 Full soon such vengeance will he take  
 That you shall wish the fiery Dane  
 Had rather been your guest again.  
 Behind, a darker hour ascends !  
 The altars quake, the crosier bends,  
 The ire of a despotic king  
 Rides forth upon destruction's wing ;  
 Then shall these vaults, so strong and  
 deep,  
 Burst open to the sea-wind's sweep ;

Some traveller then shall find my bones  
Whitening amid disjointed stones,  
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,  
Marvel such relics here should be."

Fixed was her look and stern her air :  
Back from her shoulders streamed her  
hair ;

The locks that wont her brow to shade  
Stared up erectly from her head ;  
Her figure seemed to rise more high ;  
Her voice despair's wild energy  
Had given a tone of prophecy.  
Appalled the astonished conclave sate ;  
With stupid eyes, the men of fate  
Gazed on the light inspired form,  
And listened for the avenging storm ;  
The judges felt the victim's dread ;  
No hand was moved, no word was said,  
Till thus the abbot's doom was given,  
Raising his sightless balls to heaven :  
" Sister, let thy sorrows cease ;  
Sinful brother, part in peace ! "

From that dire dungeon, place of doom,  
Of execution too, and tomb,  
Paced forth the judges three ;  
Sorrow it were and shame to tell  
The butcher-work that there befell.  
When they had glided from the cell  
Of sin and misery.

An hundred winding steps convey  
That conclave to the upper day ;  
But ere they breathed the fresher air  
They heard the shriekings of despair,  
And many a stifled groan.  
With speed their upward way they  
take,—

Such speed as age and fear can make,—  
And crossed themselves for terror's sake,  
As hurrying, tottering on.  
Even in the vesper's heavenly tone  
They seemed to hear a dying groan,  
And bade the passing knell to toll  
For welfare of a parting soul.  
Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,  
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung ;  
To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,  
His beads the wakeful hermit told ;  
The Bamborough peasant raised his  
head,

But slept ere half a prayer he said ;  
So far was heard the mighty knell,  
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,  
Spread his broad nostrils to the wind,  
Listed before, aside, behind,  
Then couched him down beside the hind,  
And quaked among the mountain fern,  
To hear that sound so dull and stern.

## CANTO THIRD

## THE HOSTEL, OR INN

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode ;  
The mountain path the Palmer showed  
By glen and streamlet winded still,  
Where stunted birches hid the rill.  
They might not choose the lowland road,  
For the Merse forayers were abroad,  
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,  
Had scarcely failed to bar their way ;  
Oft on the trampling band from crown  
Of some tall cliff the deer looked down ;  
On wing of jet from his repose  
In the deep heath the blackcock rose ;  
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,  
Nor waited for the bending bow ;  
And when the stony path began  
By which the naked peak they wan,  
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.  
The noon had long been passed before  
They gained the height of Lammer-  
moor ;

Thence winding down the northern  
way,  
Before them at the close of day  
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

No summons calls them to the tower,  
To spend the hospitable hour.  
To Scotland's camp the lord was gone ;  
His cautious dame, in bower alone,  
Dreaded her castle to unclose,  
So late, to unknown friends or foes.

On through the hamlet as they paced,  
Before a porch whose front was graced,  
With bush and flagon trimly placed,  
Lord Marmion drew his rein :  
The village inn seemed large, though  
rude ;

Its cheerful fire and hearty food  
Might well relieve his train.  
Down from their seats the horsemen  
sprung,

With jingling spurs the court-yard rung :  
They bind their horses to the stall,  
For forage, food, and firing call,  
And various clamor fills the hall :  
Weighing the labor with the cost,  
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,  
Through the rude hostel might you gaze,  
Might see where in dark nook aloof  
The rafters of the sooty roof  
Bore wealth of winter cheer ;  
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,  
And gammons of the tusky boar,  
And savory haunch of deer.

The chimney arch projected wide ;  
 Above, around it, and beside,  
     Were tools for housewives' hand ;  
 Nor wanted, in that martial day,  
 The implements of Scottish fray,  
     The buckler, lance, and brand.  
 Beneath its shade, the place of state.  
 On oaken settle Marmion sate,  
 And viewed around the blazing hearth  
 His followers mix in noisy mirth :  
 Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,  
 From ancient vessels ranged aside  
 Full actively their host supplied.

Theirs was the glee of martial breast.  
 And laughter theirs at little jest ;  
 And oft Lord Marmion deigned to aid,  
 And mingle in the mirth they made ;  
 For though, with men of high degree.  
 The proudest of the proud was he,  
 Yet, trained in camps, he knew the  
     art

To win the soldier's hardy heart.  
 They love a captain to obey,  
 Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May ;  
 With open hand and brow as free,  
 Lover of wine and minstrelsy ;  
 Ever the first to scale a tower,  
 As venturous in a lady's bower : —  
 Such buxom chief shall lead his host  
 From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,  
 Right opposite the Palmer stood,  
 His thin dark visage seen but half,  
     Half hidden by his hood.  
 Still fixed on Marmion was his look,  
 Which he, who ill such gaze could  
     brook.

Strove by a frown to quell ;  
 But not for that, though more than once  
 Full met their stern encountering glance,  
 The Palmer's visage fell.

By fits less frequent from the crowd  
 Was heard the burst of laughter loud ;  
 For still, as squire and archer stared  
 On that dark face and matted beard,  
     Their glee and game declined.  
 All gazed at length in silence drear,  
 Unbroke save when in comrade's ear  
 Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,  
 Thus whispered forth his mind :  
 "Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such  
     sight?"

How pale his cheek, his eye how bright  
 Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light,  
 Glances beneath his cowl!  
 Full on our lord he sets his eye ;

For his best palfrey would not I  
 Endure that sullen scowl."

But Marmion, as to chase the awe  
 Which thus had quelled their hearts  
     who saw

The ever-varying firelight show  
 That figure stern and face of woe,  
 Now called upon a squire ;

"Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some  
     lay,

To speed the lingering night away ?  
 We slumber by the fire."

"So please you," thus the youth rejoined,  
 "Our choicest-minstrel's left behind.  
 Ill may we hope to please your ear.  
 Accustomed Constant's strains to hear.  
 The harp full deftly can he strike,  
 And wake the lover's lute alike ;  
 To dear Saint Valentine no thrush  
 Sings livelier from a springtide bush,  
 No nightingale her lovelorn tune  
 More sweetly warbles to the moon.  
 Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,  
 Detains from us his melody,  
 Lavished on rocks and billows stern,  
 Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.  
 Now must I venture as I may,  
 To sing his favorite roundelay."

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,  
 The air he chose was wild and sad ;  
 Such have I heard in Scottish land  
 Rise from the busy, harvest band,  
 When falls before the mountaineer  
 On Lowland plains the ripened ear.  
 Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,  
 Now a wild chorus swells the song ;  
 Oft have I listened and stood still  
 As it came softened up the hill,  
 And deemed it the lament of men  
 Who languished for their native glen,  
 And thought how sad would be such  
     sound

On Susquehanna's swampy ground,  
 Kentucky's wood-encumbered brake,  
 Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,  
 Where heart-sick exiles in the strain  
 Recalled fair Scotland's hills again !

#### SONG

Where shall the lover rest,  
 Whom the fates sever  
 From his true maiden's breast,  
 Parted forever ?  
 Where, through groves deep and high,  
 Sounds the far billow,  
 Where early violets die,  
 Under the willow.

## CHORUS

*Eleu loro, etc.* Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,  
Cool streams are laving ;  
There, while the tempests sway,  
Scarce are boughs waving ;  
There thy rest shalt thou take,  
Parted forever,  
Never again to wake,  
Never, O never !

## CHORUS

*Eleu loro, etc.* Never, O never !

Where shall the traitor rest,  
He the deceiver,  
Who could win maiden's breast,  
Ruin and leave her ?  
In the lost battle,  
Borne down by the flying,  
Where mingles war's rattle  
With groans of the dying.

## CHORUS

*Eleu loro, etc.* There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap  
O'er the false-hearted ;  
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,  
Ere life be parted.  
Shame and dishonor sit  
By his grave ever ;  
Blessing shall hallow it,—  
Never, O never !

## CHORUS

*Eleu loro, etc.* Never, O never !

It ceased, the melancholy sound,  
And silence sunk on all around.  
The air was sad ; but sadder still  
It fell on Marmion's ear.  
And plained as if disgrace and ill,  
And shameful death, were near.  
He drew his mantle past his face,  
Between it and the hand,  
And rested with his head a space  
Reclining on his hand,  
His thoughts I scan not ; but I ween  
That, could their import have been  
seen,  
The meanest groom in all the hall,  
That e'er tied courser to a stall,  
Would scarce have wished to be their  
prey.  
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

High minds, of native pride and force,  
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse !  
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains  
have,

Thou art the torturer of the brave !  
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel  
Their minds to bear the wounds they  
feel,  
Even while they writhe beneath the  
smart

Of civil conflict in the heart.  
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,  
And smiling to Fitz-Eustace said :  
" Is it not strange that, as ye sung,  
Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,  
Such as in nunneries they toll  
For some departing sister's soul !  
Say, what may this portend ?"  
Then first the Palmer silence broke,—  
The livelong day he had not spoke,—  
" The death of a dear friend."

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye  
Ne'er changed in worst extremity ;  
Marmion, whose soul could scantily  
brook

Even from his king a haughty look ;  
Whose accent of command controlled  
In camps the boldest of the bold—  
Thought, look, and utterance failed him  
now,  
Fallen was his glance and flushed his  
brow :

For either in the tone,  
Or something in the Palmer's look,  
So full upon his conscience strook,  
That answer he found none.  
Thus oft it haps that when within  
They shrink at sense of secret sin,  
A feather daunts the brave ;  
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,  
And proudest princes veil their eyes  
Before their meanest slave.

Well might he falter !—By his aid  
Was Constance Beverley betrayed.  
Not that he augured of the doom  
Which on the living closed the tomb :  
But, tired to hear the desperate maid  
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid,  
And wroth because in wild despair  
She practised on the life of Clare,  
Its fugitive the Church he gave,  
Though not a victim, but a slave,  
And deemed restraint in convent  
strange  
Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.  
Himself, proud Henry's favorite peer,  
Held Romish thunders idle fear ;

Secure his pardon he might hold  
For some slight mulct of penance-gold.  
Thus judging, he gave secret way  
When the stern priests surprised their  
prey.

His train but deemed the favorite page  
Was left behind to spare his age;  
Or other if they deemed, none dared  
To mutter what he thought and heard:  
Woe to the vassal who durst pry  
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!

His conscience slept—he deemed her  
well,

And safe secured in distant cell;  
But wakened by her favorite lay,  
And that strange Palmer's boding say,  
That fell so ominous and drear  
Full on the object of his fear,  
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,  
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose;  
And Constance, late betrayed and  
scorned,

All lovely on his soul returned;  
Lovely as when at treacherous call  
She left her convent's peaceful wall,  
Crimsoned with shame, with terror  
mute,  
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,  
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,  
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

"Alas!" he thought, "how changed that  
mien!

How changed these timid looks have  
been,  
Since years of guilt and of disguise  
Have steeled her brow and armed her  
eyes!

No more of virgin terror speaks  
The blood that mantles in her cheeks;  
Fierce and unfeminine are there,  
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair;  
And I the cause—for whom were given  
Her peace on earth, her hopes in  
heaven!—

Would," thought he, as the picture  
grows.

"I on its stalk had left the rose!  
Oh, why should man's success remove  
The very charms that wake his love?—  
Her convent's peaceful solitude  
Is now a prison harsh and rude;  
And, pent within the narrow cell,  
How will her spirit chafe and swell!  
How brook the stern monastic laws!  
The penance how—and I the cause!—  
Vigil and scourge—perchance even  
worse!

And twice he rose to cry, "To horse!"  
And twice his sovereign's mandate came,  
Like damp upon a kindling flame;  
And twice he thought, "Gave I not  
charge?

She should be safe, though not at  
large?

They durst not, for their island, shred  
One golden ringlet from her head."

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove  
Repentance and reviving love,  
Like whirlwinds whose contending sway  
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,  
Their host the Palmer's speech had  
heard,

And talkative took up the word:

"Ay, reverend pilgrim, you who stray  
From Scotland's simple land away,

To visit realms afar,  
Full often learn the art to know  
Of future weal or future woe,  
By word, or sign, or star;

Yet might a knight his fortune hear,  
If, Knight-like, he despises fear,  
Not far from hence;—if fathers old  
Aright our hamlet legend told."

These broken words the menials move,—  
For marvels still the vulgar love,—  
And Marmion giving license cold,  
His tale the host thus gladly told:—

#### THE HOST'S TALE

"A clerk could tell what years have  
flown

Since Alexander filled our throne,—  
Third monarch of that warlike name,—  
And eke the time when here he came  
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord:

A braver never drew a sword;  
A wiser never, at the hour

Of midnight, spoke the word of power;  
The same whom ancient records call  
The founder of the Goblin-Hall.

I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay  
Gave you that cavern to survey.

Of lofty roof and ample size,  
Beneath the castle deep it lies:  
To hew the living rock profound,  
The floor to pave, the arch to round,  
There never toiled a mortal arm,

It all was wrought by word and charm;  
And I have heard my grandsire say

That the wild clamor and affray  
Of those dread artisans of hell,  
Who labored under Hugo's spell,  
Sounded as loud as ocean's war  
Among the caverns of Dunbar.

.. The king Lord Gifford's castle sought,  
 Deep laboring with uncertain thought.  
 Even then he mustered all his host,  
 To meet upon the western coast ;  
 For Norse and Danish galleys plied  
 Their oars within the Firth of Clyde.  
 There floated Haco's banner trim  
 Above Norweyan warriors grim,  
 Savage of heart and large of limb,  
 Threatening both continent and isle,  
 Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.  
 Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,  
 Heard Alexander's bugle sound,  
 And tarried not his garb to change,  
 But, in his wizard habit strange,  
 Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight :  
 His mantle lined with fox-skins white ;  
 His high and wrinkled forehead bore  
 A pointed cap, such as of yore  
 Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore ;  
 His shoes were marked with cross and  
 spell,

Upon his breast a pentacle ;  
 His zone of virgin parchment thin,  
 Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,  
 Bore many a planetary sign,  
 Combust, and retrograde, and trine ;  
 And in his hand he held prepared  
 A naked sword without a guard.

.. Dire dealings with the fiendish race  
 Had marked strange lines upon his face ;  
 Vigil and fast had worn him grim,  
 His eyesight dazzled seemed and dim,  
 As one unused to upper day ;  
 Even his own menials with dismay  
 Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly sire  
 In this unwonted wild attire ;  
 Unwonted, for traditions run  
 He seldom thus beheld the sun.  
 ' I know,' he said,—his voice was hoarse  
 And broken seemed its hollow force,—  
 ' I know the cause, although untold,  
 Why the king seeks his vassal's hold :  
 Vainly from me my liege would know  
 His kingdom's future weal or woe ;  
 But yet, if strong his arm and heart,  
 His courage may do more than art.

... Of middle air the demons proud,  
 Who ride upon the racking cloud,  
 Can read in fixed or wandering star  
 The issue of events afar,  
 But still their sullen aid withhold.  
 Save when by mightier force controlled.  
 Such late I summoned to my hall ;  
 And though so potent was the call  
 That scarce the deepest nook of hell  
 I deemed a refuge from the spell,

Yet, obstinate in silence still,  
 The haughty demon mocks my skill.  
 But thou,—who little know'st thy might  
 As born upon that blessed night  
 When yawning graves and dying groan  
 Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown,—  
 With untaught valor shalt compel  
 Response denied to magic spell.'

' Gramercy,' quoth our monarch free,  
 ' Place him but front to front with me,  
 And, by this good and honored brand,  
 The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,  
 Soothly I swear that, tide what tide,  
 The demon shall a buffet bide.'  
 His bearing bold the wizard viewed,  
 And thus, well pleased, his speech re-  
 newed :

' There spoke the blood of Malcolm !—  
 mark :  
 Forth pacing hence at midnight dark,  
 The rampart seek whose circling crown  
 Crests the ascent of yonder down :  
 A southern entrance shalt thou find ;  
 There halt, and there thy bugle wind,  
 And trust thine elfin foe to see  
 In guise of thy worst enemy.  
 Couch then thy lance and spur thy  
 steed—

Upon him ! and Saint George to speed !  
 If he go down, thou soon shalt know  
 Whate'er these airy sprites can show ;  
 If thy heart fail thee in the strife,  
 I am no warrant for thy life.'

" Soon as the midnight bell did ring,  
 Alone and armed, forth rode the king  
 To that old camp's deserted round.  
 Sir Knight, you well might mark the  
 mound

Left hand the town,—the Pictish race  
 The trench, long since, in blood did  
 trace ;

The moor around is brown and bare,  
 The space within is green and fair.  
 The spot our village children know,  
 For there the earliest wild-flowers grow ;  
 But woe betide the wandering wight  
 That treads its circle in the night !  
 The breadth across, a bowshot clear,  
 Gives ample space for full career ;  
 Opposed to the four points of heaven,  
 By four deep gaps are entrance given.  
 The southernmost our monarch passed,  
 Halted, and blew a gallant blast ;  
 And on the north, within the ring,  
 Appeared the form of England's king,  
 Who then, a thousand leagues afar,  
 In Palestine waged holy war ;  
 Yet arms like England's did he wield ;

Alike the leopards in the shield,  
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,  
The rider's length of limb the same.  
Long afterwards did Scotland know  
Fell Edward was her deadliest foe.

"The vision made our monarch start,  
But soon he manned his noble heart,  
And in the first career they ran,  
The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man ;  
Yet did a splinter of his lance  
Through Alexander's visor glance,  
And razed the skin—a puny wound.  
The king, light leaping to the ground,  
With naked blade his phantom foe  
Compelled the future war to show.

Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,  
Where still gigantic bones remain,  
Memorial of the Danish war ;  
Himself he saw, amid the field,  
On high his brandished war-axe wield  
And strike proud Haco from his car,  
While all around the shadowy kings  
Denmark's grim ravens cowered their  
wings.

'T is said that in that awful night  
Remoter visions met his sight,  
Foreshowing future conquest far,  
When our sons' sons wage Northern  
war ;

A royal city, tower and spire,  
Reddened the midnight sky with fire,  
And shouting crews her navy bore  
Triumphant to the victor shore.  
Such signs may learned clerks explain,  
They pass the wit of simple swain.

"The joyful king turned home again,  
Headed his host, and quelled the Dane ;  
But yearly, when returned the night  
Of his strange combat with the sprite,

His wound must bleed and smart ;  
Lord Gifford then would gibing say,  
'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay  
The penance of your start.'

Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,  
King Alexander fills his grave,

Our Lady give him rest !  
Yet still the knightly spear and shield  
The Elfin Warrior doth wield

Upon the brown hill's breast,  
And many a knight hath proved his  
chance

In the charmed ring to break a lance,  
But all have foully sped ;

Save two, as legends tell, and they  
Were Wallace wight and Gilbert  
Hay.—

Gentles, my tale is said."

The quaighs were deep, the liquor  
strong,

And on the tale the yeoman-throng  
Had made a comment sage and long,

But Marmion gave a sign,  
And with their lord the squires retire,  
The rest around the hostel fire

Their drowsy limbs recline ;  
For pillow, underneath each head  
The quiver and the targe were laid.  
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,  
Oppressed with toil and ale, they snore ;  
The dying flame, in fitful change,  
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

Apart, and nestling in the hay  
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay ;  
Scarce by the pale moonlight were seen  
The foldings of his mantle green :  
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,  
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,  
Of hawk or hound, or ring or glove,  
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.  
A cautious tread his slumber broke,  
And, close beside him when he woke,  
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,  
Stood a tall form with nodding plume ;  
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,  
His master Marmion's voice he knew :

"Fitz-Eustace! rise,—I cannot rest ;  
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my  
breast,  
And graver thoughts have chafed my  
mood ;

The air must cool my feverish blood,  
And fain would I ride forth to see  
The scene of elfin chivalry.  
Arise, and saddle me my steed ;  
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed  
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy  
slaves ;

I would not that the prating knaves  
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,  
That I could credit such a tale."  
Then softly down the steps they slid,  
Eustace the stable door undid.  
And, darkling, Marmion's steed arrayed,  
While, whispering, thus the baron  
said :—

"Didst never, good my youth, hear tell  
That on the hour when I was born  
Saint George, who graced my sire's cha-  
pelle,

Down from his steed of marble fell,  
A weary wight forlorn?

The flattering chaplains all agree  
The champion left his steed to me.

I would, the omen's truth to show,  
That I could meet this elfin foe!  
Blithe would I battle for the right  
To ask one question at the sprite.—  
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there  
be,

An empty race, by fount or sea  
To dashing waters dance and sing,  
Or round the green oak wheel their  
ring."

Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,  
And from the hostel slowly rode.

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,  
And marked him pace the village road,  
And listened to his horse's tramp,  
Till, by the lessening sound,

He judged that of the Pictish camp  
Lord Marmion sought the round.  
Wonder it seemed, in the squire's eyes,  
That one, so wary held and wise,—  
Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received  
For gospel what the Church believed,—

Should, stirred by idle tale,  
Ride forth in silence of the night,  
As hoping half to meet a sprite,  
Arrayed in plate and mail.  
For little did Fitz-Eustace know  
That passions in contending flow  
Unfix the strongest mind;  
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,  
We welcome fond credulity,  
Guide confident, though blind.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,  
But patient waited till he heard  
At distance, pricked to utmost speed,  
The foot-tramp of a flying steed  
Come townward rushing on;  
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,  
Then, clattering on the village road,—  
In other pace than forth he yode,

Returned Lord Marmion,  
Down hastily he sprung from selle,  
And in his haste wellnigh he fell;  
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,  
And spoke no word as he withdrew:  
But yet the moonlight did betray  
The falcon-crest was soiled with clay;  
And plainly might Fitz Eustace see,  
By stains upon the charger's knee  
And his left side, that on the moor  
He had not kept his footing sure.  
Long musing on these wondrous signs,  
At length to rest the squire reclines,  
Broken and short; for still between  
Would dreams of terror intervene:  
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark  
The first notes of the morning lark.

## CANTO FOURTH

## THE CAMP

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark  
The first notes of the merry lark.  
The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,  
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,  
And with their light and lively call  
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.

Whistling they came and free of heart,  
But soon their mood was changed;  
Complaint was heard on every part  
Of some thing disarranged.  
Some clamored loud for armor lost;  
Some brawled and wrangled with the  
host;

'By Becket's bones,' cried one, 'I fear  
That some false Scot has stolen my  
spear!'

Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second  
squire,

Found his steed wet with sweat and mire,  
Although the rated horse-boy swore  
Last night he dressed him sleek and fair.  
While chafed the impatient squire like  
thunder,

Old Hubert shouts in fear and wonder.—  
Help, gentle Blount! help, comrades all!  
Bevis lies dying in his stall;  
To Marmion who the plight dare tell  
Of the good steed he loves so well?'  
Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw  
The charger panting on his straw;  
Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,  
'What else but evil could betide,  
With that cursed Palmer for our guide?  
Better we had through mire and bush  
Been lantern-led by Friar Rush.'

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but  
guessed,

Nor wholly understood,  
His comrades' clamorous complaints sup-  
pressed:

He knew Lord Marmion's mood.  
Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,  
And found deep plunged in gloomy  
thought,

And did his tale display  
Simply, as if he knew of nought  
To cause such disarray.

Lord Marmion gave attention cold,  
Nor marvelled at the wonders told,—  
Passed them as accidents of course,  
And bade his clarions sound to horse.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the  
cost  
Had reckoned with their Scottish host;



And, as the charge he cast and paid,  
 "Ill thou deserv'st thy hire," he said;  
 "Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?  
 Fairies have ridden him all the night,  
 And left him in a foam!

I trust that soon a conjuring band,  
 With English cross and blazing brand,  
 Shall drive the devils from this land  
 To their infernal home;

For in this haunted den, I trow,  
 All night they trampled to and fro."  
 The laughing host looked on the hire:  
 "Gramercy, gentle southern squire,  
 And if thou com'st among the rest,  
 With Scottish broadsword to be blest,  
 Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,  
 And short the pang to undergo."  
 Here stayed their talk, for Marmion  
 Gave now the signal to set on.  
 The Palmer showing forth the way,  
 They journeyed all the morning-day.

The greensward way was smooth and  
 good,  
 Through Humble's and through Saltoun's  
 wood;

A forest glade, which, varying still,  
 Here gave a view of dale and hill  
 There narrower closed till overhead  
 A vaulted screen the branches made.  
 "A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said;  
 "Such as where errant knights might  
 see

Adventures of high chivalry,  
 Might meet some damsel flying fast,  
 With hair unbound and looks aghast;  
 And smooth and level course were here,  
 In her defence to break a spear.  
 Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells;  
 And oft in such, the story tells,  
 The damsel kind, from danger freed,  
 Did grateful pay her champion's meed."  
 He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind,  
 Perchance to show his lore designed;

For Eustace much had pored  
 Upon a huge romantic tome,  
 In the hall-window of his home,  
 Imprinted at the antique dome  
 Of Caxton or de Worde.

Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,  
 For Marmion answered nought again.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,  
 In notes prolonged by wood and hill,  
 Were heard to echo far;

Each ready archer grasped his bow,  
 But by the flourish soon they know  
 They breathed no point of war.  
 Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,

Lord Marmion's order speeds the band  
 Some opener ground to gain;  
 And scarce a furlong had they rode,  
 When thinner trees receding showed  
 A little woodland plain.  
 Just in that advantageous glade  
 The halting troop a line had made,  
 As forth from the opposing shade  
 Issued a gallant train.

First came the trumpets, at whose clang  
 So late the forest echoes rang;  
 On prancing steeds they forward pressed,  
 With scarlet mantle, azure vest;  
 Each at his trump a banner wore,  
 Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore:  
 Heralds and pursuivants, by name  
 Bute, Islay, Marchmont, Rothsay,  
 came,  
 In painted tabards, proudly showing  
 Gules, argent, or, and azure glowing.  
 Attendant on a king-at-arms,  
 Whose hand the armorial truncheon  
 held  
 That feudal strife had often quelled  
 When wildest its alarms.

He was a man of middle age,  
 In aspect manly, grave, and sage,  
 As on king's errand come;  
 But in the glances of his eye  
 A penetrating, keen, and sly  
 Expression found its home;  
 The flash of that satiric rage  
 Which, bursting on the early stage,  
 Branded the vices of the age,  
 And broke the keys of Rome.  
 On milk-white palfrey forth he paced;  
 His cap of maintenance was graced  
 With the proud heron-plume.  
 From his steed's shoulder, loin, and  
 breast,  
 Silk housings swept the ground,  
 With Scotland's arms, device, and crest.  
 Embroidered round and round.  
 The double tressure might you see,  
 First by Achaius borne,  
 The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,  
 And gallant unicorn.  
 So bright the king's armorial coat  
 That scarce the dazzled eye could note.  
 In living colors blazoned brave,  
 The Lion, which his title gave;  
 A train, which well becomed his state,  
 But all unarmed, around him wait.  
 Still is thy name in high account,  
 And still thy verse has charms,  
 Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,  
 Lord Lion King-at-arms!

Down from his horse did Marmion spring  
 Soon as he saw the Lion-King ;  
 For well the stately baron knew  
 To him such courtesy was due  
 Whom royal James himself had crowned,  
 And on his temples placed the round  
 Of Scotland's ancient diadem,  
 And wet his brow with hallowed wine,  
 And on his finger given to shine  
 The emblematic gem.  
 Their mutual greetings duly made,  
 The Lion thus his message said :—  
 ' Though Scotland's King hath deeply

swore  
 Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,  
 And strictly hath forbid resort  
 From England to his royal court,  
 Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name  
 And honors much his warlike fame,  
 My liege hath deemed it shame and  
 lack

Of courtesy to turn him back ;  
 And by his order I, your guide,  
 Must lodging fit and fair provide  
 Till finds King James meet time to see  
 The flower of English chivalry."

Though inly chafed at this delay,  
 Lord Marmion bears it as he may.  
 The Palmer, his mysterious guide,  
 Beholding thus his place supplied,  
 Sought to take leave in vain ;  
 Strict was the Lion-King's command  
 That none who rode in Marmion's band  
 Should sever from the train.  
 " England has here enow of spies  
 In Lady Heron's witching eyes :"  
 To Marchmount thus apart he said,  
 But fair pretext to Marmion made.  
 The right-hand path they now decline,  
 And trace against the stream the Tyne.

At length up that wild dale they wind,  
 Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the  
 bank ;

For there the Lion's care assigned  
 A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.  
 That castle rises on the steep  
 Of the green vale of Tyne ;  
 And far beneath, where slow they creep  
 From pool to eddy, dark and deep,  
 Where alders moist and willows weep,  
 You hear her streams repine.  
 The towers in different ages rose,  
 Their various architecture shows  
 The builders' various hands ;  
 A mighty mass, that could oppose,  
 When deadliest hatred fired its foes,  
 The vengeful Douglas bands.

Crichtoun ! though now thy miry court  
 But pens the lazy steer and sheep,  
 Thy turrets rude and tottered keep  
 Have been the minstrel's loved resort.  
 Oft have I traced, within thy fort,  
 Of mouldering shields the mystic  
 sense,  
 Scutcheons of honor or pretence,  
 Quartered in old armorial sort,  
 Remains of rude magnificence.  
 Nor wholly yet hath time defaced  
 Thy lordly gallery fair,  
 Nor yet the stony cord unbraced  
 Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,  
 Adorn thy ruined stair.  
 Still rises unimpaired below  
 The court-yard's graceful portico ;  
 Above its cornice, row and row  
 Of fair-hewn facets richly show  
 Their pointed diamond form,  
 Though there but houseless cattle go,  
 To shield them from the storm.  
 And, shuddering, still may we explore,  
 Where oft whilom were captives pent,  
 The darkness of thy Massy More.  
 Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,  
 May trace in undulating line  
 The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

Another aspect Crichtoun showed  
 As through its portal Marmion rode ;  
 But yet 't was melancholy state  
 Received him at the outer gate,  
 For none were in the castle then  
 But women, boys, or aged men.  
 With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing  
 dame  
 To welcome noble Marmion came ;  
 Her son, a stripling twelve years old,  
 Proffered the baron's rein to hold :  
 For each man that could draw a sword  
 Had marched that morning with their  
 lord.

Earl Adam Hepburn,—he who died  
 On Flodden by his sovereign's side.  
 Long may his lady look in vain !  
 She ne'er shall see his gallant train  
 Come sweeping back through Crichtoun  
 Dean.

'T was a brave race before the name  
 Of hated Bothwell stained their fame.

And here two days did Marmion rest,  
 With every right that honor claims,  
 Attended as the king's own guest :—  
 Such the command of Royal James,  
 Who marshalled then his land's array,  
 Upon the Borough-moor that lay.  
 Perchance he would not foeman's eye

Upon his gathering host should pry,  
Till full prepared was every band  
To march against the English land.  
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's  
wit

Oft cheer the baron's moodier fit;  
And, in his turn, he knew to prize  
Lord Marmion's powerful mind and  
wise,—

Trained in the lore of Rome and Greece,  
And policies of war and peace.

It chanced, as fell the second night.

That on the battlements they walked,  
And by the slowly fading light  
Of varying topics talked:

And, unaware, the herald-bard  
Said Marmion might his toil have spared

In travelling so far,  
For that a messenger from heaven  
In vain to James had counsel given

Against the English war;  
And, closer questioned, thus he told  
A tale which chronicles of old  
In Scottish story have enrolled:—

#### SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE

"Of all the palaces so fair,

Built for the royal dwelling  
In Scotland, far beyond compare  
Lindlithgow is excelling;

And in its park, in jovial June,  
How sweet the merry linnets tune,  
How blithe the blackbird's lay!

The wild buck bells from ferny brake,  
The coot dives merry on the lake,  
The saddest heart might pleasure take  
To see all nature gay.

But June is to our sovereign dear  
The heaviest month in all the year;  
Too well his cause of grief you know,  
June saw his father's overthrow.  
Woe to the traitors who could bring  
The princely boy against his king!  
Still in his conscience burns the sting.  
In offices as strict as Lent  
King James's June is ever spent.

"When last this ruthless month was  
come,

And in Lindlithgow's holy dome  
The king, as wont, was praying;  
While for his royal father's soul  
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,  
The bishop mass was saying—

For now the year brought round again  
The day the luckless king was slain—  
In Catherine's aisle the monarch knelt,  
With sackcloth shirt and iron belt,

And eyes with sorrow streaming;  
Around him in their stalls of state  
The Thistle's Knight-Companions sate,  
Their banners o'er them beaming.  
I too was there, and, sooth to tell,  
Bedeafened with the jangling knell,  
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,  
Through the stained casement gleam-  
ing;

But while I marked what next befell

It seemed as I were dreaming,  
Stepped from the crowd a ghostly wight,  
In azure gown, with cincture white;  
His forehead bald, his head was bare,  
Down hung at length his yellow hair.—  
Now, mock me not when, good my lord,  
I pledge to you my knightly word  
That when I saw his placid grace,  
His simple majesty of face,  
His solemn bearing, and his pace

So stately gliding on,—  
Seemed to me ne'er did limner paint  
So just an image of the saint  
Who propped the Virgin in her faint,  
The loved Apostle John!

"He stepped before the monarch's chair,  
And stood with rustic plainness there,  
And little reverence made;  
Nor head, nor body, bowed, nor bent,  
But on the desk his arm he leant,  
And words like these he said,  
In a low voice,—but never tone  
So thrilled through vein, and nerve, and  
bone:—

"My mother sent me from afar,  
Sir King, to warn thee not to war,—  
Woe waits on thine array;  
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,  
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,  
James Stuart, doubly warned, beware:  
God keep thee as He may!"—  
The wondering monarch seemed to seek  
For answer, and found none;  
And when he raised his head to speak,  
The monitor was gone.

The marshal and myself had cast  
To stop him as he outward passed;  
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,  
He vanished from our eyes,  
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,  
That glances but, and dies."

While Lindesay told his marvel strange  
The twilight was so pale,  
He marked not Marmion's color change  
While listening to the tale;  
But, after a suspended pause,  
The baron spoke: "Of Nature's laws



So strong I held the force,  
That never superhuman cause  
Could e'er control their course,  
And, three days since, had judged your  
aim  
Was but to make your guest your  
game:  
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,  
What much has changed my sceptic  
creed,  
And made me credit aught."—He stayed,  
And seemed to wish his words unsaid,  
But, by that strong emotion pressed  
Which prompts us to unload our breast  
Even when discovery's pain,  
To Lindesay did at length unfold  
The tale his village host had told,  
At Gifford, to his train.  
Nought of the Palmer says he there,  
And nought of Constance or of Clare;  
The thoughts which broke his sleep he  
seems  
To mention but as feverish dreams.

"In vain," said he, "to rest I spread  
My burning limbs and couched my head;  
Fantastic thoughts returned,  
And, by their wild dominion led,  
My heart within me burned,  
So sore was the delirious goad,  
I took my steed and forth I rode,  
And, as the moon shone bright and  
cold,  
Soon reached the camp upon the wold.  
The southern entrance I passed through,  
And halted, and my bugle blew,  
Methought an answer met my ear,—  
Yet was the blast so low and drear,  
So hollow, and so faintly blown,  
It might be echo of my own.

"Thus judging, for a little space  
I listened ere I left the place,  
But scarce could trust my eyes,  
Nor yet can think they serve me true,  
When sudden in the ring I view,  
In form distinct of shape and hue,  
A mounted champion rise,—  
I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,  
In single fight and mixed affray,  
And ever, I myself may say,  
Have borne me as a knight;  
But when this unexpected foe  
Seemed starting from the gulf below,—  
I care not though the truth I show,—  
I trembled with affright;  
And as I placed in rest my spear,  
My hand so shook for very fear,  
I scarce could couch it right.

"Why need my tongue the issue tell?  
We ran our course,—my charger fell;—  
What could he 'gainst the shock of  
hell?

I rolled upon the plain.  
High o'er my head with threatening  
hand

The spectre shook his naked brand,—  
Yet did the worst remain:  
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—  
Not opening hell itself could blast  
Their sight like what I saw!  
Full on his face the moonbeam strook!—  
A face could never be mistook!  
I knew the stern vindictive look,  
And held my breath for awe.

I saw the face of one who, fled  
To foreign climes, has long been dead,—  
I well believe the last;  
For ne'er from visor raised did stare  
A human warrior with a glare  
So grimly and so ghast.

Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade;  
But when to good Saint George I prayed,  
—The first time e'er I asked his aid,—  
He plunged it in the sheath,  
And, on his courser mounting light,  
He seemed to vanish from my sight:  
The moonbeam drooped, and deepest  
night

Sunk down upon the heath.—  
'T were long to tell what cause I have  
To know his face that met me there,  
Called by his hatred from the grave  
To cumber upper air;  
Dead or alive, good cause had he  
To be my mortal enemy."

Marvelled Sir David of the Mount:  
Then, learned in story, gan recount  
Such chance had happened of old,  
When once, near Norham, there did  
fight

A spectre fell of fiendish might,  
In likeness of a Scottish knight,  
With Brian Bulmer bold,  
And trained him nigh to disallow  
The aid of his baptismal vow,  
"And such a phantom, too," 't is said,  
With Highland broadsword, targe, and  
plaid,

And fingers red with gore,  
Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,  
Or where the sable pine-trees shade  
Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,  
Dromouchty, or Glenmore.  
And yet, what'er such legends say  
Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,  
On mountain, moor, or plain,

Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,  
 True son of chivalry should hold  
 These midnight terrors vain ;  
 For seldom have such spirits power  
 To harm, save in the evil hour  
 When guilt we meditate within  
 Or harbor unrepented sin."—  
 Lord Marmion turned him half aside,  
 And twice to clear his voice he tried,  
 Then pressed Sir David's hand,—  
 But nought, at length, in answer said ;  
 And here their further converse stayed,  
 Each ordering that his band  
 Should bowne them with the rising day,  
 To Scotland's camp to take their way,—  
 Such was the king's command.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,  
 And I could trace each step they trode ;  
 Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,  
 Lies on the path to me unknown.  
 Much might it boast of storied lore ;  
 But, passing such digression o'er,  
 Suffice it that their route was laid  
 Across the furzy hills of Braid.  
 They passed the glen and scanty rill,  
 And climbed the opposing bank, until  
 They gained the top of Blackford Hill.

Blackford ! on whose uncultured breast,  
 Among the broom and thorn and whin,  
 A truant-boy, I sought the nest,  
 Or listed, as I lay at rest,  
 While rose on breezes thin  
 The murmur of the city crowd,  
 And, from his steeple jangling loud,  
 Saint Giles's mingling din.  
 Now, from the summit to the plain,  
 Waves all the hill with yellow grain ;  
 And o'er the landscape as I look,  
 Nought do I see unchanged remain,  
 Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.  
 To me they make a heavy moan  
 Of early friendships past and gone.

But different far the change has been,  
 Since Marmion from the crown  
 Of Blackford saw that martial scene  
 Upon the bent so brown :  
 Thousand pavilions, white as snow,  
 Spread all the Borough-moor below,  
 Upland, and dale, and down.  
 A thousand did I say ? I ween,  
 Thousands on thousands there were seen.  
 That checkered all the heath between  
 The streamlet and the town,  
 In crossing ranks extending far,  
 Forming a camp irregular ;  
 Oft giving way where still there stood

Some relics of the old oak wood,  
 That darkly huge did intervene  
 And tamed the glaring white with green :  
 In these extended lines there lay  
 A martial kingdom's vast array.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,  
 To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,  
 And from the southern Redswire edge  
 To furthest Rosse's rocky ledge,  
 From west to east, from south to north,  
 Scotland sent all her warriors forth.  
 Marmion might hear the mingled hum  
 Of myriads up the mountain come,—  
 The horses' tramp and tinkling clank,  
 Where chiefs reviewed their vassal rank,  
 And charger's shrilling neigh,—  
 And see the shifting lines advance,  
 While frequent flashed from shield and  
 lance  
 The sun's reflected ray.

Thin curling in the morning air,  
 The wreaths of failing smoke declare  
 To embers now the brands decayed,  
 Where the night-watch their fires had  
 made.  
 They saw, slow rolling on the plain,  
 Full many a baggage-cart and wain,  
 And dire artillery's clumsy car,  
 By sluggish oxen tugged to war ;  
 And there were Borthwick's Sisters  
 Seven,  
 And culverins which France had given.  
 Ill-omened gift ! the guns remain  
 The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

Nor marked they less where in the air  
 A thousand streamers flaunted fair ;  
 Various in shape, device, and hue,  
 Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,  
 Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and  
 square,  
 Scroll, pennon, pencil, handrol, there  
 O'er the pavilions flew.  
 Highest and midmost, was descried  
 The royal banner floating wide ;  
 The staff, a pine-tree, strong and  
 straight,  
 Pitched deeply in a massive stone,  
 Which still in memory is shown,  
 Yet bent beneath the standard's  
 weight,  
 Whene'er the western wind unrolled  
 With toil the huge and cumbrous  
 fold,  
 And gave to view the dazzling field,  
 Where in proud Scotland's royal shield  
 The ruddy lion ramped in gold.

Lord Marmion viewed the landscape  
bright,

He viewed it with a chief's delight,  
Until within him burned his heart,  
And lightning from his eye did part,  
As on the battle-day ;  
Such glance did falcon never dart  
When stooping on his prey.

" Oh ! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,  
Thy king from warfare to dissuade  
Were but a vain essay ;  
For, by Saint George, were that host  
mine,

Not power infernal nor divine  
Should once to peace my soul incline,  
Till I had dimmed their armor's shine  
In glorious battle-fray ! "

Answered the bard, of milder mood :  
" Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere  
good

That kings would think withal,  
When peace and wealth their land has  
blessed,

'Tis better to sit still at rest  
Than rise, perchance to fall. "

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stayed,  
For fairer scene he ne'er surveyed.  
When sated with the martial show  
That peopled all the plain below ;  
The wandering eye could o'er it go,  
And mark the distant city glow

With gloomy splendor red ;  
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and  
slow,

That round her sable turrets flow,  
The morning beams were shed,  
And tinged them with a lustre proud,  
Like that which streaks a thunder-  
cloud.

Such dusky grandeur clothed the height  
Where the huge castle holds its state,  
And all the steep slope down,

Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,  
Piled deep and massy, close and high.  
Mine own romantic town !

But northward far, with purer blaze,  
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,  
And as each heathy top they kissed,  
It gleamed a purple amethyst.

Yonder the shores of Fife you saw,  
Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-law ;

And, broad between them rolled,  
The gallant Firth the eye might note,  
Whose islands on its bosom float,  
Like emeralds chased in gold.

Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent ;  
As if to give his rapture vent,  
The spur he to his charger lent,

And raised his bridle hand,  
And making demi-volt in air,  
Cried, " Where's the coward that would  
not dare

To fight for such a land ! "

The Lindesay smiled his joy to see,  
Nor Marmion's frown repressed his glee.

Thus while they looked, a flourish proud,  
Where mingled trump and clarion loud,  
And fife, and kettle-drum,  
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,  
And war-pipe with discordant cry,  
And cymbal clattering to the sky,  
Making wild music bold and high,  
Did up the mountain come ;

The whilst the bells with distant chime  
Merrily tolled the hour of prime,  
And thus the Lindesay spoke :

" Thus clamor still the war-notes when  
The king to mass his way has ta'en,  
Or to Saint Catherine's of Sienne,  
Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.

To you they speak of martial fame,  
But me remind of peaceful game,

When blither was their cheer,  
Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,  
In signal none his steed should spare.  
But strive which foremost might  
repair

To the downfall of the deer.

" Nor less," he said, " when looking forth  
I view yon Empress of the North  
Sit on her hilly throne,

Her palace's imperial bowers,  
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,  
Her stately halls and holy towers—

Nor less," he said, " I moan  
To think what woe mischance may  
bring,

And how these merry bells may ring  
The death-dirge of our gallant king,

Or with their larum call  
The burghers forth to watch and ward,  
'Gainst Southern sack and fires to  
guard

Dun-Edin's leaguered wall.—

But not for my presaging thought,  
Dream conquest sure or cheaply bought !

Lord Marmion, I say nay :

God is the guider of the field,  
He breaks the champion's spear and  
shield ;

But thou thyself shalt say,  
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,  
That England's dames must weep in  
bower,

Her monks the death-mass sing ;

For never saw'st thou such a power  
 Led on by such a king."  
 And now, down winding to the plain,  
 The barriers of the camp they gain,  
 And there they made a stay,—  
 There stays the Minstrel till he fling  
 His hand o'er every Border string,  
 And fit his harp the pomp to sing  
 Of Scotland's ancient court and king,  
 In the succeeding lay.

## CANTO FIFTH

## THE COURT

THE train has left the hills of Braid ;  
 The barrier guard have open made—  
 So Lindesay bade—the palisade  
 That closed the tented ground ;  
 Their men the warders backward drew,  
 And carried pikes as they rode through  
 Into its ample bound.  
 Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,  
 Upon the Southern band to stare,  
 And envy with their wonder rose,  
 To see such well-appointed foes ;  
 Such length of shafts, such mighty  
 bows,

So huge, that many simply thought  
 But for a vaunt such weapons wrought,  
 And little deemed their force to feel  
 Through links of mail and plates of steel  
 When, rattling upon Flodden vale,  
 The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view  
 Glance every line and squadron through,  
 And much he marvelled one small land  
 Could marshal forth such various band ;

For men-at-arms were here,  
 Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,  
 Like iron towers for strength and weight  
 On Flemish steeds of bone and height,  
 With battle-axe and spear.  
 Young knights and squires, a lighter  
 train,

Practised their charges on the plain,  
 By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,  
 Each warlike feat to show.

To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,  
 And high curvet, that not in vain  
 The sword-sway might descend amain  
 On foeman's casque below

He saw the hardy burghers there  
 March armed on foot with faces bare,

For visor they wore none,  
 Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight ;  
 But burnished were their corselets  
 bright,

Their brigantines and gorgets light

Like very silver shone.  
 Long pikes they had for standing fight,—  
 Two-handed swords they wore,  
 And many wielded mace of weight,  
 And bucklers bright they bore.

On foot the yeoman too, but dressed  
 In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,

With iron quilted well ;  
 Each at his back—a slender store—  
 His forty days' provision bore,  
 As feudal statutes tell.

His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,  
 A crossbow there, a hagbut here,  
 A dagger-knife, and brand.

Sober he seemed and sad of cheer,  
 As loath to leave his cottage dear  
 And march to foreign strand,  
 Or musing who would guide his steer  
 To till the fallow land.

Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye  
 Did aught of dastard terror lie ;  
 More dreadful far his ire  
 Than theirs who, scorning danger's name  
 In eager mood to battle came,  
 Their valor like light straw on flame,  
 A fierce but fading fire.

Not so the Borderer :—bred to war,  
 He knew the battle's din afar,  
 And joyed to hear it swell.  
 His peaceful day was slothful ease ;  
 Nor harp nor pipe his ear could please  
 Like the loud slogan yell.

On active steed, with lance and blade,  
 The light-armed pricker plied his trade,—  
 Let nobles fight for fame :

Let vassals follow where they lead,  
 Burghers, to guard their townships,  
 bleed.

But war's the Borderers' game.  
 Their gain, their glory, their delight,  
 To sleep the day, maraud the night,  
 O'er mountain, moss and moor ;  
 Joyful to fight they took their way,  
 Scarce caring who might win the day,  
 Their booty was secure.

These, as Lord Marmion's train passed  
 by,

Looked on at first with careless eye,  
 Nor marvelled aught, well taught to  
 know

The form and force of English bow.  
 But when they saw the lord arrayed  
 In splendid arms and rich brocade,  
 Each Borderer to his kinsman said,—  
 "Hist, Ringan ! seest thou there !  
 Canst guess which road they'll homeward  
 ride ?



Oh! could we but on Border side,  
By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,  
Beset a prize so fair!  
That fangless Lion, too, their guide,  
Might chance to lose his glistening hide;  
Brown Maudlin of that doublet pied  
Could make a kirtle rare."

Next, Marmion marked the Celtic race,  
Of different language, form, and face,  
A various race of man;

Just then the chiefs their tribes arrayed,  
And wild and garish semblance made  
The checkered trews and belted plaid,  
And varying notes the war-pipes brayed  
To every varying clan.

Wild through their red or sable hair  
Looked out their eyes with savage stare  
On Marmion as he passed;

Their legs above the knee were bare;  
Their frame was sinewy, short, and  
spare,

And hardened to the blast;  
Of taller race, the chiefs their own  
Were by the eagle's plumage known.  
The hunted red-deer's undressed hide  
Their hairy buskins well supplied;  
The graceful bonnet decked their head;  
Back from their shoulders hung the  
plaid;

A broadsword of unwieldy length,  
A dagger proved for edge and strength,  
A studded targe they wore,  
And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but,  
oh!

Short was the shaft and weak the bow  
To that which England bore.  
The Isles-men carried at their backs  
The ancient Danish battle-axe.  
They raised a wild and wondering cry,  
As with his guide rode Marmion by,  
Loud were their clamoring tongues, as  
when

The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen  
And, with their cries discordant mixed,  
Grumbled and yelled the pipes betwixt.

Thus through the Scottish camp they  
passed,

And reached the city gate at last,  
Where all around, a wakeful guard,  
Armed burghers kept their watch and  
ward.

Well had they cause of jealous fear,  
When lay encamped in field so near  
The Borderer and the Mountaineer.  
As through the bustling streets they go,  
All was alive with martial show;  
At every turn with dinning clang

The armorer's anvil clashed and rang,  
Or toiled the swarthy smith to wheel  
The bar that arms the charger's heel,  
Or axe or falchion to the side  
Of jarring grindstone was applied,  
Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying  
pace,

Through street and lane and market-  
place,

Bore lance or casque or sword;  
While burghers, with important face,  
Described each new-come lord,  
Discussed his lineage, told his name,  
His following, and his warlike fame.  
The Lion led to lodging meet,  
Which high o'erlooked the crowded  
street;

There must the baron rest  
Till past the hour of vesper tide,  
And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—  
Such was the king's behest.  
Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns  
A banquet rich and costly wines  
To Marmion and his train;  
And when the appointed hour succeeds,  
The baron dons his peaceful weeds,  
And following Lindesay as he leads,  
The palace halls they gain.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily  
That night with wassail, mirth, and  
glee:

King James within her princely bower  
Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,  
Summoned to spend the parting hour;  
For he had charged that his array  
Should southward march by break of  
day.

Well loved that splendid monarch aye  
The banquet and the song,  
By day the tourney, and by night  
The merry dance, traced fast and light,  
The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,  
The revel loud and long.

This feast outshone his banquets past;  
It was his blithest—and his last.  
The dazzling lamps from gallery gay  
Cast on the court a dancing ray;  
Here to the harp did minstrels sing,  
There ladies touched a softer string;  
With long-eared cap and motley vest,  
The licensed fool retailed his jest;  
His magic tricks the juggler plied;  
At dice and draughts the gallants vied;  
While some, in close recess apart,  
Courtied the ladies of their heart,

Nor courted them in vain;  
For often in the parting hour  
Victorious Love asserts his power



O'er coldness and disdain ;  
And flinty is her heart can view  
To battle march a lover true—  
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,  
Nor own her share of pain.

Through this mixed crowd of glee and  
game  
The king to great Lord Marmion came,  
While, reverent, all made room.  
An easy task it was, I trow,  
King James's manly form to know,  
Although, his courtesy to show,  
He doffed to Marmion bending low  
His brodered cap and plume.  
For royal were his garb and mien :  
His cloak of crimson velvet piled,  
Trimmed with the fur of marten wild,  
His vest of changeful satin sheen,  
The dazzled eye beguiled ;  
His gorgeous collar hung adown,  
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's  
crown,  
The thistle brave of old renown ;  
His trusty blade, Toledo right,  
Descended from a baldric bright ;  
White were his buskins, on the heel  
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel ;  
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,  
Was buttoned with a ruby rare :  
And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen  
A prince of such a noble mien.

The monarch's form was middle size,  
For feat of strength or exercise  
Shaped in proportion fair ;  
And hazel was his eagle eye,  
And auburn of the darkest dye  
His short curled beard and hair.  
Light was his footstep in the dance,  
And firm his stirrup in the lists ;  
And, oh ! he had that merry glance  
That seldom lady's heart resists.  
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,  
And loved to plead, lament and sue,—  
Suit lightly won and short-lived pain,  
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.  
I said he joyed in banquet bower :  
But, mid his mirth, 't was often strange  
How suddenly his cheer would change,  
His look o'ercast and lower,  
If in a sudden turn he felt  
The pressure of his iron belt,  
That bound his breast in penance pain,  
In memory of his father slain.  
Even so 't was strange how evermore,  
Soon as the passing pang was o'er,  
Forward he rushed with double glee  
Into the stream of revelry.

Thus dim-seen object of affright  
Startles the courser in his flight,  
And half he halts, half springs aside,  
But feels the quickening spur applied,  
And, straining on the tightened rein,  
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,  
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway ;  
To Scotland's court she came,  
To be a hostage for her lord,  
Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,  
And with the king to make accord  
Had sent his lovely dame.  
Nor to that lady free alone  
Did the gay king allegiance own ;  
For the fair Queen of France  
Sent him a turquoise ring and glove,  
And charged him, as her knight and love,  
For her to break a lance,  
And strike three strokes with Scottish  
brand,  
And march three miles on Southron land  
And bid the banners of his band  
In English breezes dance.  
And thus for France's queen he drest  
His manly limbs in mailed vest,  
And thus admitted English fair  
His inmost councils still to share,  
And thus for both he madly planned  
The ruin of himself and land !  
And yet, the sooth to tell,  
Nor England's fair nor France's queen  
Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and  
sheen,  
From Margaret's eyes that fell,—  
His own Queen Margaret, who in Lith-  
gow's bower  
All lonely sat and wept the weary hour.

The queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,  
And weeps the weary day  
The war against her native soil,  
Her monarch's risk in battle broil,—  
And in gay Holy-Rood the while  
Dame Heron rises with a smile  
Upon the harp to play.  
Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er  
The strings her fingers flew ;  
And as she touched and tuned them all,  
Ever her bosom's rise and fall  
Was plainer given to view :  
For, all for heat, was laid aside  
Her wimple, and her hood untied.  
And first she pitched her voice to sing,  
Then glanced her dark eye on the king,  
And then around the silent ring,  
And laughed, and blushed, and oft did  
say

Her pretty oath, by yea and nay,  
 She could not, would not, durst not play !  
 At length, upon the harp, with glee,  
 Mingled with arch simplicity,  
 A soft yet lively air she rung,  
 While thus the wily lady sung :—

### LOCHINVAR

#### LADY HERON'S SONG

Oh ! young Lochinvar is come out of the  
 west,  
 Through all the wide Border his steed  
 was the best ;  
 And save his good broadsword he  
 weapons had none.  
 He rode all unarmed and he rode all  
 alone.  
 So faithful in love and so dauntless in  
 war,  
 There never was knight like the young  
 Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake and he stopped  
 not for stone,  
 He swam the Eske river where ford there  
 was none,  
 But ere he alighted at Netherby gate  
 The bride had consented, the gallant  
 came late :  
 For a laggard in love and a dastard in  
 war  
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Loch-  
 invar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,  
 Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and  
 brothers, and all :  
 Then spoke the bride's father, his hand  
 on his sword,—  
 For the poor craven bridegroom said  
 never a word,—  
 ' Oh ! come ye in peace here, or come ye  
 in war,  
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord  
 Lochinvar ? '—

• I long wooed your daughter, my suit  
 you denied ;  
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs  
 like its tide—  
 And now am I come, with this lost love  
 of mine,  
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup  
 of wine.  
 There are maidens in Scotland more  
 lovely by far,  
 That would gladly be bride to the young  
 Lochinvar.'

The bride kissed the goblet ; the knight  
 took it up,  
 He quaffed off the wine, and he threw  
 down the cup.  
 She looked down to blush, and she looked  
 up to sigh,  
 With a smile on her lips and a tear in  
 her eye.  
 He took her soft hand ere her mother  
 could bar,—  
 ' Now tread we a measure ! ' said young  
 Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her  
 face,  
 That never a hall such a galliard did  
 grace ;  
 While her mother did fret, and her  
 father did fume,  
 And the bridegroom stood dangling his  
 bonnet and plume ;  
 And the bride-maidens whispered  
 ' 'Twere better by far  
 To have matched our fair cousin with  
 young Lochinvar.'

One touch to her hand and one word in  
 her ear,  
 When they reached the hall-door, and  
 the charger stood near ;  
 So light to the croupe the fair lady he  
 swung,  
 So light to the saddle before her he  
 sprung !  
 ' She is won ! we are gone, over bank,  
 bush, and scaur ;  
 They'll have fleet steeds that follow,'  
 quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of  
 the Netherby clan ;  
 Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they  
 rode and they ran :  
 There was racing and chasing on Can-  
 nobie Lee,  
 But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did  
 they see.  
 So daring in love and so dauntless in  
 war,  
 Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young  
 Lochinvar ?

The monarch o'er the siren hung,  
 And beat the measure as she sung ;  
 And, pressing closer and more near,  
 He whispered praises in her ear.  
 In loud applause the courtiers vied,  
 And ladies winked and spoke aside.  
 The witching dame to Marmion  
 threw

A glance, where seemed to reign  
 The pride that claims applauses due,  
 And of her royal conquest too  
 A real or feigned disdain :  
 Familiar was the look, and told  
 Marmion and she were friends of old.  
 The king observed their meeting eyes  
 With something like displeased sur-  
 prise ;  
 For monarchs ill can rivals brook,  
 Even in a word, or smile, or look.  
 Straight took he forth the parchment  
 broad  
 Which Marmion's high commission  
 showed :  
 " Our Borders sacked by many a raid,  
 Our peaceful liege-men robbed," he said,  
 " On day of truce our warden slain,  
 Stout Barton killed, his vessels ta'en—  
 Unworthy were we here to reign,  
 Should these for vengeance cry in vain ;  
 Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,  
 Our herald has to Henry borne."

He paused, and led where Douglas stood  
 And with stern eye the pageant viewed ;  
 I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,  
 Who coronet of Angus bore,  
 And, when his blood and heart were  
 high,  
 Did the third James in camp defy,  
 And all his minions led to die  
 On Lauder's dreary flat.  
 Princess and favorites long grew tame,  
 And trembled at the homely name  
 Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat ;  
 The same who left the dusky vale  
 Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,  
 Its dungeons and its towers,  
 Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,  
 And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,  
 To fix his princely bowers.  
 Though now in age he had laid down  
 His armor for the peaceful gown,  
 And for a staff his brand,  
 Yet often would flash forth the fire  
 That could in youth a monarch's ire  
 And minion's pride withstand ;  
 And even that day at council board,  
 Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,  
 Against the war had Angus stood,  
 And chafed his royal lord.  
 His giant-form, like ruined tower,  
 Though fallen its muscles' brawny vaunt,  
 Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and  
 gaunt,  
 Seemed o'er the gaudy scene to lower ;  
 His locks and beard in silver grew,  
 His eyebrows kept their sable hue.

Near Douglas when the monarch stood,  
 His bitter speech he thus pursued :  
 " Lord Marmion, since these letters say  
 That in the North you needs must stay  
 While slightest hopes of peace remain,  
 Uncourteous speech it were and stern  
 To say—Return to Lindisfarne,  
 Until my herald come again.  
 Then rest you in Tantallon hold ;  
 Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—  
 A chief unlike his sires of old.  
 He wears their motto on his blade,  
 Their blazon o'er his towers displayed,  
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose  
 More than to face his country's foes.  
 And, I bethink me, by Saint Stephen,  
 But e'en this morn to me was given  
 A prize, the first fruits of the war,  
 Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,  
 A bevy of the maids of heaven.  
 Under your guard these holy maids  
 Shall safe return to cloister shades,  
 And, while they at Tantallon stay,  
 Requiem for Cochran's soul may say."  
 And with the slaughtered favorite's  
 name

Across the monarch's brow there came  
 A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame.

In answer nought could Angus speak,  
 His proud heart swelled well-nigh to  
 break ;  
 He turned aside, and down his cheek  
 A burning tear there stole.  
 His hand the monarch sudden took,  
 That sight his kind heart could not  
 brook :

" Now, by the Bruce's soul,  
 Angus, my hasty speech forgive !  
 For sure as doth his spirit live,  
 As he said of the Douglas old,  
 I well may say of you,—  
 That never king did subject hold,  
 In speech more free, in war more bold,  
 More tender and more true ;  
 Forgive me, Douglas, once again."—  
 And, while the king his hand did strain,  
 The old man's tears fell down like rain.  
 To seize the moment Marmion tried,  
 And whispered to the king aside :  
 " Oh ! let such tears unwonted plead  
 For respite short from dubious deed !  
 A child will weep a bramble's smart,  
 A maid to see her sparrow part,  
 A stripling for a woman's heart ;  
 But woe awaits a country when  
 She sees the tears of bearded men.  
 Then, oh ! what omen, dark and high,  
 When Douglas wets his manly eye ! "

Displeased was James that stranger  
viewed  
And tampered with his changing mood.  
"Laugh those that can, weep those that  
may."

Thus did the fiery monarch say,  
"Southward I march by break of day ;  
And if within Tantallon strong  
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,  
Perchance our meeting next may fall  
At Tamworth in his castle-hall."—  
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,  
And answered grave the royal vaunt :  
"Much honored were my humble home,  
If in its halls King James should come ;  
But Nottingham has archers good,  
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood,  
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.  
On Derby Hills the paths are steep,  
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep ;  
And many a banner will be torn,  
And many a knight to earth be borne,  
And many a sheaf of arrows spent.  
Ere Scotland's king shall cross the Trent :  
Yet pause, brave prince, while yet you  
may !"—

The monarch lightly turned away,  
And to his nobles loud did call,  
"Lords, to the dance,—a hall ! a hall !"  
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,  
And led Dame Heron gallantly :  
And minstrels, at the royal order,  
Rung out ' Blue Bonnets o'er the Border.'

Leave we these revels now to tell  
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,  
Whose galley, as they sailed again  
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.  
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide  
Till James should of their fate decide,  
And soon by his command  
Were gently summoned to prepare  
To journey under Marmion's care,  
As escort honored, safe, and fair,  
Again to English land.  
The abbess told her chaplet o'er,  
Nor knew which Saint she should  
implore ;

For, when she thought of Constance, sore  
She feared Lord Marmion's mood.  
And judge what Clara must have felt !  
The sword that hung in Marmion's belt  
Had drunk De Wilton's blood.  
Unwittingly King James had given,  
As guard to Whitby's shades,  
The man most dreaded under heaven  
By these defenceless maids ;  
Yet what petition could avail,  
Or who would listen to the tale

Of woman, prisoner, and nun,  
Mid bustle of a war begun ?  
They deemed it hopeless to avoid  
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

Their lodging, so the king assigned,  
To Marmion's as their guardian, joined ;  
And thus it fell that, passing nigh,  
The Palmer caught the abbess' eye,  
Who warned him by a scroll  
She had a secret to reveal  
That much concerned the Church's weal  
And health of sinner's soul ;  
And, with deep charge of secrecy,  
She named a place to meet  
Within an open balcony,  
That hung from dizzy pitch and high  
Above the stately street,  
To which, as common to each home,  
At night they might in secret come.

At night in secret there they came,  
The Palmer and the holy dame.  
The moon among the clouds rode high,  
And all the city hum was by.  
Upon the street, where late before  
Did din of war and warriors roar,

You might have heard a pebble fall,  
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,  
An owl flap his boding wing  
On Giles's steeple tall.  
The antique buildings, climbing high,  
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,  
Were here wrapt deep in shade ;  
There on their brows the moonbeam  
broke

Through the faint wreaths of silvery  
smoke,

And on the casements played.  
And other light was none to see,  
Save torches gliding far,  
Before some chieftain of degree  
Who left the royal revelry  
To bowne him for the war.—  
A solemn scene the abbess chose,  
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

"O holy Palmer !" she began,—  
"For sure he must be sainted man,  
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground  
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found,—  
For his dear Church's sake, my tale  
Attend, nor deem of light avail,  
Though I must speak of worldly love,—  
How vain to those who wed above !—  
De Wilton and Lord Marmion wooed  
Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood ;—  
Idle it were of Whitby's dame  
To say of that same blood I came ;—

And once, when jealous rage was high,  
 Lord Marmion said despitiously,  
 Wilton was traitor in his heart,  
 And had made league with Martin  
 Swart

When he came here on Simnel's part,  
 And only cowardice did restrain  
 His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—  
 And down he threw his glove. The  
 thing

Was tried, as wont, before the king;  
 Where frankly did De Wilton own  
 That Swart in Guelders he had known,  
 And that between them then there  
 went

Some scroll of courteous compliment.  
 For this he to his castle sent;  
 But when his messenger returned,  
 Judge how De Wilton's fury burned!  
 For in his packet there were laid  
 Letters that claimed disloyal aid  
 And proved King Henry's cause be-  
 trayed.

His fame, thus blighted, in the field  
 He strove to clear by spear and  
 shield;—

To clear his fame in vain he strove,  
 For wondrous are His ways above!  
 Perchance some form was unobserved,  
 Perchance in prayer or faith he  
 swerved,

Else how could guiltless champion quail,  
 Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

"His squire, who now De Wilton saw  
 As recreant doomed to suffer law,  
 Repentant, owned in vain  
 That while he had the scrolls in care  
 A stranger maiden, passing fair,  
 Had drenched him with a beverage  
 rare;

His words no faith could gain.  
 With Clare alone he credence won,  
 Who, rather than wed Marmion,  
 Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,  
 To give our house her livings fair  
 And die a vestal votaress there.  
 The impulse from the earth was given,  
 But bent her to the paths of heaven.  
 A purer heart, a lovelier maid,  
 Ne'er sheltered her in Whitby's shade,  
 No, not since Saxon Edelfled;  
 Only one trace of earthly stain,

That for her lover's loss  
 She cherishes a sorrow vain,  
 And murmurs at the cross.—  
 And then her heritage:—it goes  
 Along the banks of Tame;  
 Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,

In meadows rich the heifer lows,  
 The falconer and huntsman knows  
 Its woodlands for the game.  
 Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,  
 And I, her humble votaress here,  
 Should do a deadly sin,  
 Her temple spoiled before mine eyes,  
 If this false Marmion such a prize  
 By my consent should win;  
 Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn  
 That Clare shall from our house be torn,  
 And grievous cause have I to fear  
 Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

"Now, prisoner, helpless, and betrayed  
 To evil power, I claim thine aid,

By every step that thou hast trod  
 To holy shrine and grotto dim,  
 By every martyr's tortured limb,  
 By angel, saint, and seraphim,  
 And by the Church of God!

For mark: when Wilton was betrayed,  
 And with his squire forged letters laid,  
 She was, alas! that sinful maid

By whom the deed was done,—  
 Oh! shame and horror to be said!

She was—a perjured nun!  
 No clerk in all the land like her  
 Traced quaint and varying character.  
 Perchance you may a marvel deem,  
 That Marmion's paramour—  
 For such vile thing she was—should  
 scheme

Her lover's nuptial hour;  
 But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,  
 As privy to his honor's stain,  
 Illimitable power.

For this she secretly retained  
 Each proof that might the plot reveal,  
 Instructions with his hand and seal;  
 And thus Saint Hilda deigned,  
 Through sinners' perfidy impure,  
 Her house's glory to secure  
 And Clare's immortal weal.

"T were long and needless here to tell  
 How to my hand these papers fell;  
 With me they must not stay.  
 Saint Hilda keep her abbess true!

Who knows what outrage he might do  
 While journeying by the way?—  
 O blessed Saint, if e'er again  
 I venturous leave thy calm domain,  
 To travel or by land or main,  
 Deep penance may I pay!—

Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer:  
 I give this packet to thy care,  
 For thee to stop they will not dare;  
 And oh! with cautious speed

To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,  
That he may show them to the king;  
And for thy well-earned meed,  
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine  
A weekly mass shall still be thine  
While priest can sing and read.—  
What ail'st thou?—Speak!—For as he  
took  
The charge a strong emotion shook  
His frame, and ere reply  
They heard a faint yet shrilly tone,  
Like distant clarion feebly blown,  
That on the breeze did die;  
And loud the abbess shrieked in fear,  
"Saint Withold, save us!—What is here;  
Look at yon City Cross!  
See on its battled tower appear  
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear  
And blazoned banners toss!"—

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillared stone,  
Rose on a turret octagon:—  
But now is razed that monument,  
Whence royal edict rang,  
And voice of Scotland's law was sent  
In glorious trumpet-clang.  
Oh! be his tomb as lead to lead  
Upon its dull destroyers head!—  
A minstrel's malison is said.—  
Then on its battlements they saw  
A vision, passing Nature's law,  
Strange, wild, and dimly seen:  
Figures that seemed to rise and die,  
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,  
While nought confirmed could ear or eye  
Discern of sound or mien.  
Yet darkly did it seem as there  
Heralds and pursuivants prepare,  
With trumpet sound and blazon fair,  
A summons to proclaim;  
But indistinct the pageant proud,  
As fancy forms of midnight cloud  
When flings the moon upon her shroud  
A wavering tinge of flame;  
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,  
From midmost of the spectre crowd,  
This awful summons came:—

"Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,  
Whose names I now shall call,  
Scottish or foreigner, give ear!  
Subjects of him who sent me here,  
At his tribunal to appear  
I summon one and all:  
I cite you by each deadly sin  
That e'er hath soiled your hearts within;  
I cite you by each brutal lust  
That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—  
By wrath, by pride, by fear,

By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,  
By the dark grave and dying groan!  
When forty days are passed and gone,  
I cite you, at your monarch's throne  
To answer and appear."—  
Then thundered forth a roll of names:—  
The first was thine, unhappy James!  
Then all thy nobles came;  
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,  
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle.—  
Why should I tell their separate style?  
Each chief of birth and fame,  
Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,  
Foredoomed to Flodden's carnage pile,  
Was cited there by name:  
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,  
Of Lutterward, and Scriverlabye;  
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,  
The self-same thundering voice did  
say.—

But then another spoke:  
"Thy fatal summons I deny  
And thine infernal lord defy,  
Appealing me to Him on high,  
Who burst the sinner's yoke."  
At that dread accent, with a scream,  
Parted the pageant like a dream,  
The summoner was gone.  
Prone on her face the abbess fell,  
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell;  
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,  
And found her there alone.  
She marked not, at the scene aghast,  
What time or how the Palmer passed.

Shift we the scene.—The camp doth  
move;

Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,  
Save when, for weal of those they love,  
To pray the prayer and vow the vow,  
The tottering child, the anxious fair,  
The gray-haired sire, with pious care,  
To chapels and to shrines repair.—  
Where is the Palmer now? and where  
The abbess, Marmion, and Clare?—  
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair

They journey in thy charge:  
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,  
The Palmer still was with the band;  
Angus, like Lindesay, did command  
That none should roam at large.  
But in that Palmer's altered mien  
A wondrous change might now be seen;  
Freely he spoke of war,  
Of marvels wrought by single hand  
When lifted for a native land,  
And still looked high, as if he planned  
Some desperate deed afar.  
His courser would he feed and stroke,

And, tucking up his sable frock,  
Would first his mettle bold provoke,  
Then soothe or quell his pride.  
Old Hubert said that never one  
He saw, except Lord Marmion,  
A steed so fairly ride.

Some half-hour's march behind there  
came,

By Eustace governed fair  
A troop escorting Hilda's dame,  
With all her nuns and Clare.  
No audience had Lord Marmion sought ;  
Ever he feared to aggravate  
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate ;  
And safer 't was, he thought,  
To wait till, from the nuns removed,  
The influence of kinsmen loved,  
And suit by Henry's self approved,  
Her slow consent had wrought.  
His was no flickering flame, that dies  
Unless when fanned by looks and sighs  
And lighted oft at lady's eyes ;  
He longed to stretch his wide command  
O'er luckless Clara's ample land :  
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,  
Although the pang of humbled pride  
The place of jealousy supplied,  
Yet conquest, by that meanness won  
He almost loathed to think upon,  
Led him, at times, to hate the cause  
Which made him burst through honor's  
laws.

If e'er he loved, 'twas her alone  
Who died within that vault of stone.

And now, when close at hand they saw  
North Berwick's town and lofty Law,  
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause awhile  
Before a venerable pile

Whose turrets viewed afar  
The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,  
The ocean's peace or war.  
At tolling of a bell, forth came  
The convent's venerable dame,  
And prayed Saint Hilda's abbess rest  
With her, a loved and honored guest,  
Till Douglas should a bark prepare  
To waft her back to Whitby fair.  
Glad was the abbess, you may guess,  
And thanked the Scottish prioress ;  
And tedious were to tell, I ween,  
The courteous speech that passed be-  
tween.

O'erjoyed the nuns their palfreys  
leave :

But when fair Clara did intend,  
Like them, from horseback to descend,  
Fitz-Eustace said : " I grieve,

Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,  
Such gentle company to part ;—

Think not discourtesy,  
But lords' commands must be obeyed,  
And Marmion and the Douglas said  
That you must wend with me.  
Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,  
Which to the Scottish earl he showed,  
Commanding that beneath his care  
Without delay you shall repair  
To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare."

The startled abbess loud exclaimed ;  
But she at whom the blow was aimed  
Grew pale as death and cold as lead,—  
She deemed she heard her death-doom  
read.

" Cheer thee, my child ! " the abbess said,  
" They dare not tear thee from my hand,  
To ride alone with armed band."—

" Nay, holy mother, nay,"  
Fitz Eustace said, " the lovely Clare  
Will be in Lady Angus' care,

In Scotland while we stay ;  
And when we move an easy ride  
Will bring us to the English side,  
Female attendance to provide  
Befitting Gloster's heir ;  
Nor thinks nor dreams my noble lord,  
By slightest look, or act, or word,  
To harass Lady Clare.

Her faithful guardian he will be,  
Nor sue for slightest courtesy  
That e'en to stranger falls,  
Till he shall place her safe and free  
Within her kinsman's halls."

He spoke, and blushed with earnest  
grace ;

His faith was painted on his face,  
And Clare's worst fear relieved,  
The Lady Abbess loud exclaimed  
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,  
Entreated, threatened, grieved,  
To martyr, saint, and prophet prayed,  
Against Lord Marmion inveighed,  
And called the prioress to aid,  
To curse with candle, bell, and book.  
Her head the grave Cistercian shook :  
" The Douglas and the king," she said,  
" In their commands will be obeyed ;  
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can  
fall

The maiden in Tantallon Hall."

The abbess, seeing strife was vain,  
Assumed her wonted state again,—  
For much of state she had,—  
Composed her veil, and raised her head,  
And " Bid," in solemn voice she said,



"Thy master, bold and bad,  
The records of his house turn o'er,  
And, when he shall there written see  
That one of his own ancestry  
Drove the monks forth of Coventry,  
Bid him his fate explore!  
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,  
His charger hurled him to the dust,  
And, by a base plebeian thrust,  
He died his band before.  
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me:  
He is a chief of high degree,  
And I a poor recluse,  
Yet oft in holy writ we see  
Even such weak minister as me  
May the oppressor bruise:  
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay  
The mighty in his sin,  
And Jael thus, and Deborah"—  
Here hasty Blount broke in:  
"Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band;  
Saint Anton fire thee! wilt thou stand  
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,  
To hear the lady preach?  
By this good light! if thus we stay,  
Lord Marmion for our fond delay  
Will sharper sermon teach.  
Come, don thy cap and mount thy horse;  
The dame must patience take perforce."

"Submit we then to force," said Clare,  
"But let this barbarous lord despair  
His purposed aim to win;  
Let him take living, land, and life,  
But to be Marmion's wedded wife  
In me were deadly sin:  
And if it be the king's decree  
That I must find no sanctuary  
In that inviolable dome  
Where even a homicide might come  
And safely rest his head,  
Though at its open portals stood,  
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,  
The kinsmen of the dead,  
Yet one asylum is my own  
Against the dreaded hour,—  
A low, a silent, and a lone,  
Where kings have little power.  
One victim is before me there.—  
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer  
Remember your unhappy Clare!"  
Loud weeps the abbess, and bestows  
Kind blessings many a one;  
Weeping and wailing loud arose,  
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes  
Of every simple nun.  
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,  
And scarce rude Blount the sight could  
bide.

Then took the squire her rein,  
And gently led away her steed,  
And by each courteous word and deed  
To cheer her strove in vain.

But scant three miles the band had rode,  
When o'er a height they passed,  
And, sudden, close before them showed  
His towers Tantallon vast,  
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,  
And held impregnable in war.  
On a projecting rock they rose,  
And round three sides the ocean flows.  
The fourth did battled walls enclose  
And double mound and fosse.

By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,  
Through studded gates, an entrance  
long,

To the main court they cross.  
It was a wide and stately square;  
Around were lodgings fit and fair,  
And towers of various form,  
Which on the court projected far  
And broke its lines quadrangular.  
Here was square keep, there turret high,  
Or pinnacle that sought the sky.  
Whence oft the warder could descry  
The gathering ocean-storm.

Here did they rest.—The princely care  
Of Douglas why should I declare,  
Or say they met reception fair?

Or why the tidings say,  
Which varying to Tantallon came,  
By hurrying posts or fleetest fame,  
With every varying day?  
And, first, they heard King James had  
won

Etall, and Wark, and Ford; and then,  
That Norham Castle strong was ta'en,  
At that sore marvelled Marmion,  
And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand  
Would soon subdue Northumberland;

But whispered news there came,  
That while his host inactive lay,  
And melted by degrees away,  
King James was dallying off the day  
With Heron's wily dame.

Such acts to chronicles I yield;  
Go seek them there and see:

Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,  
And not a history.—

At length they heard the Scottish host  
On that high ridge had made their post  
Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain;  
And that brave Surrey many a band  
Had gathered in the Southern land,  
And marched into Northumberland,  
And camp at Wooler ta'en.



Marmion, like charger in the stall,  
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,

Began to chafe and swear :—  
“ A sorry thing to hide my head  
In castle, like a fearful maid,

When such a field is near.  
Needs must I see this battle-day ;  
Death to my fame if such a fray  
Were fought, and Marmion away !

The Douglas, too, I wot not why,  
Hath bated of his courtesy ;  
No longer in his halls I'll stay : ”  
Then bade his band they should array  
For march against the dawning day.

### CANTO SIXTH

#### THE BATTLE

WHILE great events were on the gale,  
And each hour brought a varying tale,  
And the demeanor, changed and cold,  
Of Douglas fretted Marmion bold,  
And, like the impatient steed of war,  
He snuffed the battle from afar,  
And hopes were none that back again  
Herald should come from Terouenne,  
Where England's king in leaguer lay,  
Before decisive battle-day,—

While these things were, the mournful  
Clare

Did in the dame's devotions share ;  
For the good countess ceaseless prayed  
To Heaven and saints her sons to aid,  
And with short interval did pass  
From prayer to book, from book to mass,  
And all in high baronial pride,—  
A life both dull and dignified :  
Yet, as Lord Marmion nothing pressed  
Upon her intervals of rest,  
Dejected Clara well could bear  
The formal state, the lengthened prayer,  
Though dearest to her wounded heart  
The hours that she might spend apart.

I said Tantallon's dizzy steep  
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.  
Many a rude tower and rampart there  
Repelled the insult of the air,  
Which, when the tempest vexed the sky,  
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling  
by.

Above the rest a turret square  
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,  
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield ;  
The Bloody Heart was in the field,  
And in the chief three mullets stood,  
The cognizance of Douglas blood.  
The turret held a narrow stair,  
Which, mounted, gave you access where

A parapet's embattled row  
Did seaward round the castle go.  
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,  
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,  
Sometimes in platform broad extending,  
Its varying circle did combine  
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,  
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign.  
Above the booming ocean leant  
The far-projecting battlement ;  
The billows burst in ceaseless flow  
Upon the precipice below.  
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,  
Gate-works and walls were strongly  
manned ;

No need upon the sea-girt side :  
The steepy rock and frantic tide  
Approach of human step denied,  
And thus these lines and ramparts rude  
Were left in deepest solitude.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare  
Would to these battlements repair,  
And muse upon her sorrows there,  
And list the sea-bird's cry,  
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would  
glide

Along the dark-gray bulwarks' side,  
And ever on the heaving tide  
Look down with weary eye.  
Oft did the cliff and swelling main  
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—  
A home she ne'er might see again ;

For she had laid adown,  
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,  
And frontlet of the cloister pale,  
And Benedictine gown :  
It were unseemly sight, he said,  
A novice out of convent shade.—  
Now her bright locks with sunny glow  
Again adorned her brow of snow ;  
Her mantle rich, whose borders round  
A deep and fretted broidery bound,  
In golden foldings sought the ground ;  
Of holy ornament, alone  
Remained a cross with ruby stone ;

And often did she look  
On that which in her hand she bore,  
With velvet bound and broidered o'er,  
Her breviary book.

In such a place, so lone, so grim,  
At dawning pale or twilight dim,  
It fearful would have been

To meet a form so richly dressed,  
With book in hand, and cross on breast,  
And such a woful mien.

Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,  
To practise on the gull and crow,  
Saw her at distance gliding slow,

And did by Mary swear  
Some lovelorn fay she might have been,  
Or in romance some spell-bound queen,  
For ne'er in work-day world was seen  
A form so witching fair.

Once walking thus at evening tide  
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,  
And sighing thought—"The abbess there  
Perchance does to her home repair;  
Her peaceful rule, where Duty free  
Walks hand in hand with Charity,  
Where oft Devotion's tranced glow  
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow  
That the enraptured sisters see  
High vision and deep mystery,—  
The very form of Hilda fair,  
Hovering upon the sunny air.  
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.  
Oh! wherefore to my duller eye  
Did still the Saint her form deny?  
Was it that, seared by sinful scorn,  
My heart could neither melt nor burn?  
Or lie my warm affections low  
With him that taught them first to  
glow?

Yet, gentle abbess, well I knew  
To pay thy kindness grateful due,  
And well could brook the mild com-  
mand

That ruled thy simple maiden band.  
How different now, condemned to bide  
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride!—  
But Marmion has to learn ere long  
That constant mind and hate of wrong  
Descended to a feeble girl  
From Red de Clare, stout Gloster's Earl;  
Of such a stem a sapling weak,  
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

"But see!—what makes this armor  
here?"—

For in her path there lay  
Target, corselet, helm; she viewed them  
near.—

"The breastplate pierced!—Ay, much I  
fear,  
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's  
spear

That hath made fatal entrance here,  
As these dark blood-gouts say.—

Thus Wilton! Oh! not corslet's ward,  
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,  
Could be thy manly bosom's guard

On yon disastrous day!"—

She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—  
Wilton himself before her stood!  
It might have seemed his passing ghost,  
For every youthful grace was lost,

And joy unwonted and surprise  
Gave their strange wildness to his  
eyes.—

Expect not, noble dames and lords,  
That I can tell such scene in words:  
What skillful limner e'er would choose  
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,  
Unless to mortal it were given  
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?  
Far less can my weak line declare

Each changing passion's shade:  
Brightening to rapture from despair,  
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,  
And joy with her angelic air,  
And hope that paints the future fair  
Their varying hues displayed;  
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,  
Alternate conquering, shifting, blend-  
ing,

Till all fatigued the conflict yield,  
And mighty love retains the field.  
Shortly I tell what then he said,  
By many a tender word delayed,  
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,  
And question kind, and fond reply;—

#### DE WILTON'S HISTORY

"Forget we that disastrous day  
When senseless in the lists I lay.  
Thence dragged,—but how I cannot  
know

For sense and recollection fled,—  
I found me on a pallet low  
Within my ancient beadsman's shed.  
Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,  
How thou didst blush when the old man,  
When first our infant love began,  
Said we would make a matchless  
pair?"—

Menials and friends and kinsmen fled  
From the degraded traitor's bed—  
He only held my burning head,  
And tended me for many a day  
While wounds and fever held their sway.

But far more needful was his care  
When sense returned to wake despair  
For I did tear the closing wound,

And dash me frantic on the ground,  
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.

At length, to calmer reason brought,  
Much by his kind attendance wrought,

With him I left my native strand,  
And, in a palmer's weeds arrayed  
My hated name and form to shade,

I journeyed many a land,  
No more a lord of rank and birth,  
But mingled with the dregs of earth.

Oft Austin for my reason feared,

When I would sit, and deeply brood  
On dark revenge and deeds of blood,  
Or wild mad schemes upreared.  
My friend at length fell sick, and said  
God would remove him soon ;  
And while upon his dying bed  
He begged of me a boon—  
If e'er my deadliest enemy  
Beneath my brand should conquered lie,  
Even then my mercy should awake  
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

"Still restless as a second Cain,  
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,  
Full well the paths I knew.  
Fame of my fate made various sound,  
That death in pilgrimage I found,  
That I had perished of my wound,—  
None cared which tale was true ;  
And living eye could never guess  
De Wilton in his palmer's dress,  
For now that sable slough is shed,  
And trimmed my shaggy beard and  
head,

I scarcely know me in the glass.  
A chance most wondrous did provide  
That I should be that baron's guide—  
I will not name his name !—  
Vengeance to God alone belongs ;  
But, when I think on all my wrongs,  
My blood is liquid flame !  
And ne'er the time shall I forget  
When, in a Scottish hostel set,  
Dark looks we did exchange :  
What were his thoughts I cannot tell,  
But in my bosom mustered Hell  
Its plans of dark revenge.

"A word of vulgar augury  
That broke from me, I scarce knew  
why,  
Brought on a village tale,  
Which wrought upon his moody sprite,  
And sent him armed forth by night.  
I borrowed steel and mail  
And weapons from his sleeping band ;  
And, passing from a postern door,  
We met and countered, hand to hand,—  
He fell on Gifford-moor.  
For the death-stroke my brand I drew,—  
Oh ! then my helmed head he knew,  
The palmer's cowl was gone.—  
Then had three inches of my blade  
The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—  
My hand the thought of Austin stayed ;  
I left him there alone,—  
O good old man ! even from the grave  
Thy spirit could thy master save :  
If I had slain my foeman, ne'er

Had Whitby's abbess in her fear  
Given to my hand this packet dear,  
Of power to clear my injured fame  
And vindicate De Wilton's name.—  
Perchance you heard the abbess tell  
Of the strange pageantry of hell  
That broke our secret speech—  
It rose from the infernal shade,  
Or fealty was some juggle played,  
A tale of peace to teach.  
Appeal to Heaven I judged was best  
When my name came among the rest.

"Now here within Tantallon hold  
To Douglas late my tale I told,  
To whom my house was known of old.  
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright  
This eve anew shall dub me knight.  
These were the arms that once did turn  
The tide of fight on Otterburne,  
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield  
When the Dead Douglas won the field.  
These Angus gave—his armorer's care  
Ere morn shall every breach repair ;  
For nought, he said, was in his halls,  
But ancient armor on the walls,  
And aged chargers in the stalls,  
And women, priests, and gray-haired  
men ;  
The rest were all in Twisel glen.  
And now I watch my armor here,  
By law of arms, till midnight's near ;  
Then, once again a belted knight,  
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

"There soon again we meet, my Clare !  
This baron means to guide thee there :  
Douglas reveres his king's command,  
Else would he take thee from his hand.  
And there thy kinsman Surrey, too,  
Will give De Wilton justice due.  
Now meeter far for martial broil,  
Firmer my limbs and strung by toil,  
Once more"—"O Wilton ! must we then  
Risk new-found happiness again,  
Trust fate of arms once more ?  
And is there not an humble glen  
Where we, content and poor,  
Might build a cottage in the shade,  
A shepherd thou, and I to aid  
Thy task on dale and moor ?—  
That reddening brow !—too well I know  
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow  
While falsehood stains thy name :  
Go then to fight ! Clare bids thee go !  
Clare can a warrior's feelings know  
And weep a warrior's shame,  
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,  
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel

And belt thee with thy brand of steel,  
And send thee forth to fame ! ”

That night upon the rocks and bay  
The midnight moonbeam slumbering  
lay,

And poured its silver light and pure  
Through loophole and through embra-  
sure

Upon Tantallon tower and hall :  
But chief where arched windows wide  
illuminate the chapel's pride  
The sober glances fall.

Much was there need ; though seamed  
with scars,

Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,  
Though two gray priests were there,  
And each a blazing torch held high,  
You could not by their blaze descry  
The chapel's carving fair.

Amid that dim and smoky light,  
Checking the silvery moonshine bright,  
A bishop by the altar stood,

A noble lord of Douglas blood,  
With mitre sheen and rochet white.

Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye  
But little pride of prelacy ;

More pleased that in a barbarous age  
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page

Than that beneath his rule he held  
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.

Beside him ancient Angus stood,  
Doffed his furred gown and sable hood ;

O'er his huge form and visage pale  
He wore a cap and shirt of mail,

And leaned his large and wrinkled hand  
Upon the huge and sweeping brand

Which wont of yore in battle fray  
His foeman's limbs to shred away,

As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.  
He seemed as, from the tombs around

Rising at judgment-day,

Some giant Douglas may be found

In all his old array ;

So pale his face, so huge his limb,

So old his arms, his look so grim.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,  
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels ;

And think what next he must have felt  
At buckling of the falchion belt !

And judge how Clara changed her hue  
While fastening to her lover's side

A friend, which, though in danger tried,  
He once had found untrue !

Then Douglas struck him with his blade :  
“ Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,

I dub thee knight.

Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir !

For king, for church, for lady fair,

See that thou fight.”

And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,  
Said : “ Wilton ! grieve not for thy woes,

Disgrace, and trouble ;

For He who honor best bestows

May give thee double.”

De Wilton sobbed, for sob he must :

“ Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust

That Douglas is my brother ! ”

“ Nay, nay,” old Angus said, “ not so ;

To Surrey's camp thou now must go,

Thy wrongs no longer smother.

I have two sons in yonder field ;

And, if thou meet'st them under shield,

Upon them bravely—do thy worst,

And foul fall him that blanches first ! ”

Not far advanced was morning day

When Marmion did his troop array

To Surrey's camp to ride ;

He had safe-conduct for his band

Beneath the royal seal and hand,

And Douglas gave a guide.

The ancient earl with stately grace

Would Clara on her palfrey place,

And whispered in an undertone,

“ Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown.”

The train from out the castle drew,

But Marmion stopped to bid adieu :

“ Though something I might plain,” he

said,

“ Of cold respect to stranger guest,

Sent hither by your king's behest,

While in Tantallon's towers I stayed,

Part we in friendship from your land,

And, noble earl, receive my hand.”—

But Douglas round him drew his cloak,

Folded his arms, and thus he spoke :—

“ My manors, halls, and bowers shall still

Be open at my sovereign's will

To each one whom he lists, how'er

Unmeet to be the owner's peer.

My castles are my king's alone,

From turret to foundation-stone—

The hand of Douglas is his own,

And never shall in friendly grasp

The hand of such as Marmion clasp.”

Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek like

fire

And shook his very frame for ire,

And—“ This to me ! ” he said,

“ An 't were not for thy hoary beard,

Such hand as Marmion's had not spared

To cleave the Douglas' head !

And first I tell thee, haughty peer,

He who does England's message here,

Although the meanest in her state,

May well, proud Angus, be thy mate ;  
 And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,  
 Even in thy pitch of pride,  
 Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,—  
 Nay, never look upon your lord,  
 And lay your hands upon your sword,—  
 I tell thee, thou 'rt defied !  
 And if thou saidst I am not peer  
 To any lord in Scotland here,  
 Lowland or Highland, far or near,  
 Lord Angus, thou hast lied ! ”  
 On the earl's cheek the flush of rage  
 O'ercame the ashen hue of age :  
 Fierce he broke forth,—“ And darest thou  
 then  
 To beard the lion in his den,  
 The Douglas in his hall ?  
 And hopest thou hence unscathed to  
 go ?—  
 No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !  
 Up drawbridge, grooms—what, warder,  
 ho !  
 Let the portcullis fall,—”  
 Lord Marmion turned,—well was his  
 need,—  
 And dashed the rowels in his steed,  
 Like arrow through the archway sprung  
 The ponderous grate behind him rung ;  
 To pass there was such scanty room.  
 The bars descending razed his plume.

The steed along the drawbridge flies  
 Just as it trembled on the rise ;  
 Not lighter does the swallow skim  
 Along the smooth lake's level brim :  
 And when Lord Marmion reached his  
 band,  
 He halts, and turns with clenched hand,  
 And shout of loud defiance pours,  
 And shook his gauntlet at the towers.  
 “ Horse ! horse ! ” the Douglas cried, “ and  
 chase ! ”  
 But soon he reined his fury's pace :  
 “ A royal messenger he came,  
 Though most unworthy of the name.—  
 A letter forged ! Saint Jude to speed !  
 Did ever knight so foul a deed ? ”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lest the reader should partake of the Earl's astonishment and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the Countess Matilda ; which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the Third's memorable wars in France. John Harding, also, was expressly hired by Edward IV. to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs. (*Scott's note.*)

At first in heart it liked me ill  
 When the king praised his clerkly skill.  
 Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,  
 Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line ;  
 So swore I, and I swear it still,  
 Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—  
 Saint Mary mend my fiery mood !  
 Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,  
 I thought to slay him where he stood.  
 “ 'T is pity of him too,” he cried :  
 “ Bold can he speak and fairly ride,  
 I warrant him a warrior tried.”  
 With this his mandate he recalls,  
 And slowly seeks his castle halls.

The day in Marmion's journey wore ;  
 Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,  
 They crossed the heights of Stanrig-moor,  
 His troop more closely there he scanned,  
 And missed the Palmer from the band.  
 “ Palmer or not,” young Blount did say,  
 “ He parted at the peep of day ;  
 Good sooth, it was in strange array.”  
 “ In what array ? ” said Marmion quick.  
 “ My lord, I ill can spell the trick ;  
 But all night long with clink and bang  
 Close to my couch did hammers clang ;  
 At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,  
 And from a loophole while I peep,  
 Old Bell-the-Cat came from the keep,  
 Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,  
 As fearful of the morning air ;  
 Beneath, when that was blown aside,  
 A rusty shirt of mail I spied,  
 By Archibald won in bloody work  
 Against the Saracen and Turk ;  
 Last night it hung not in the hall ;  
 I thought some marvel would befall.  
 And next I saw them saddled lead  
 Old Cheviot forth, the earl's best steed,  
 A matchless horse, though something old,  
 Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.  
 I heard the Sheriff Sholto say  
 The earl did much the Master pray  
 To use him on the battle-day.  
 But he preferred ”—“ Nay, Henry, cease !  
 Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy  
 peace.—

Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,  
 What did Blount see at break of day ? ”—

“ In brief, my lord, we both descried—  
 For then I stood by Henry's side—  
 The Palmer mount and outwards ride  
 Upon the earl's own favourite steed.  
 All sheathed he was in armour bright,  
 And much resembled that same knight  
 Subdued by you in Cotswold fight ;  
 Lord Angus wished him speed.”—

The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,  
A sudden light on Marmion broke :—  
" Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"  
He muttered; "T was nor fay nor ghost  
I met upon the moonlight wold,  
But living man of earthly mould.

O dotage blind and gross!  
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust  
Had laid De Wilton in the dust.

My path no more to cross.—  
How stand we now?—he told his tale  
To Douglas, and with some avail :

"T was therefore gloomed his rugged  
brow —

Will Surrey dare to entertain  
'Gainst Marmion charge disproved and  
vain?

Small risk of that, I trow.  
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun,  
Must separate Constance from the nun—  
Oh! what a tangled web we weave  
When first we practise to deceive!  
A Palmer too!—no wonder why  
I felt rebuked beneath his eye;  
I might have known there was but one  
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed

His troop, and reached at eve the Tweed,  
Where Lennel's convent closed their  
march.

There now is left but one frail arch,  
Yet mourn thou not its cells:

Our time a fair exchange has made:  
Hard by, in hospitable shade

A reverend pilgrim dwells,  
Well worth the whole Bernardine brood

That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.  
Yet did Saint Bernard's abbot there

Give Marmion entertainment fair,  
And lodging for his train and Clare.

Next morn the baron climbed the tower,  
To view afar the Scottish power.

Encamped on Flodden edge ;  
The white pavilions made a show

Like remnants of the winter snow  
Along the dusky ridge.

Long Marmion looked :—at length his  
eye

Unusual movement might descry  
Amid the shifting lines :

The Scottish host drawn out appears,  
For, flashing on the hedge of spears,

The eastern sunbeam shines,  
Their front now deepening, now extend.

Their flank inclining, wheeling, bend

ing,

Now drawing back, and now descending.

The skilful Marmion well could know  
They watched the motions of some foe  
Who traversed on the plain below.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge  
The Scots beheld the English host  
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening  
post.

And heedful watched them as they  
crossed

The Till by Twisel Bridge.<sup>1</sup>  
High sight it is and haughty, while

High sight it is and naughtier; while  
They dive into the deep defile;  
Beneath the caverned cliff they fall.

By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree.

Troop after troop are disappearing;  
Troop after troop their banners rear.

Upon the eastern bank you see:

Still pouring down the rocky den  
Where flows the sullen Till.

And rising from the dim-wood glen,  
Standards on standards, men on men.

In slow succession still,  
And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,

And pressing on, in ceaseless march,  
To gain the opposing hill.

That morn, to many a trumpet clang,  
Twiself! thy rock's deep echo rang.

And many a chief of birth and rank,  
Saint Helen ! at thy fountain drank.

Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see  
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,

Had then from many an axe its doom,  
To give the marching columns room.

And why stands Scotland idly now,  
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,

1 On the evening previous to the memorable

1 On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's head-quarters were at Barmore-wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden-hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September, 1513, Surrey marched in a northwesterly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twifel-bridge, high where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his army between King James and his supplies from Scotland and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river as his first, but not his last, obstacle. Both over the bridge and through the ford, the passage was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage, while struggling with these natural obstacles.—(*Scott*).

Since England gains the pass the while,  
And struggles through the deep defile?  
What checks the fiery soul of James?  
Why sits that champion of the dames  
Inactive on his steed,  
And sees, between him and his land,  
Between him and Tweed's southern  
strand,

His host Lord Surrey lead?  
What vails the vain knight-errant's  
brand?—

O Douglas, for thy leading wand!  
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!  
Oh! for one hour of Wallace wight,  
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight  
And cry, "Saint Andrew and our right!"  
Another sight had seen that morn,  
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,  
And Flodden had been Bannock-  
bourne!—

The precious hour has passed in vain,  
And England's host has gained the plain,  
Wheeling their march and circling still  
Around the base of Flodden hill.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,  
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,  
"Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!  
And see ascending squadrons come

Between Tweed's river and the hill,  
Foot, horse, and cannon! Hap what hap,  
My basnet to a prentice cap,

Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!—  
Yet more! yet more!—how fair arrayed  
They file from out the hawthorn shade,  
And sweep so gallant by!

With all their banners bravely spread,  
And all their armor flashing high,  
Saint George might waken from the  
dead,

To see fair England's standards fly."—  
"Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount,  
"thou 'dst best,

And listen to our lord's behest."—  
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,  
"This instant be our band arrayed;  
The river must be quickly crossed,  
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.  
If fight King James,—as well I trust  
That fight he will, and fight he must,—  
The Lady Clare behind our lines  
Shall tarry while the battle joins."

Himself he swift on horseback threw,  
Scarce to the abbot bade adieu,  
Far less would listen to his prayer  
To leave behind the helpless Clare.  
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,  
And muttered as the flood they view,

"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,  
He scarce will yield to please a daw;  
Lord Angus may the abbot awe,  
So Clare shall bide with me."

Then on that dangerous ford and deep  
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,  
He ventured desperately:

And not a moment will he bide  
Till squire or groom before him ride;  
Headmost of all he stems the tide,  
And stems it gallantly.

Eustace held Clare upon her horse,  
Old Hubert led her rein,  
Stoutly they braved the current's course,  
And, though far downward driven per-  
force,

The southern bank they gain.  
Behind them straggling came to shore,  
As best they might, the train:

Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,  
A caution not in vain;

Deep need that day that every string.  
By wet unharmed, should sharply ring.  
A moment then Lord Marmion stayed,  
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,

Then forward moved his band,  
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,  
He halted by a cross of stone,  
That on a hillock standing lone

Did all the field command.

Hence might they see the full array  
Of either host for deadly fray;  
Their marshalled lines stretched east  
and west,

And fronted north and south,  
And distant salutation passed  
From the loud cannon mouth;  
Not in the close successive rattle  
That breathes the voice of modern battle,  
But slow and far between.

The hillock gained, Lord Marmion  
stayed:

"Here, by this cross," he gently said,  
"You well may view the scene.

Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:  
Oh! think of Marmion in thy prayer!—  
Thou wilt not?—well, no less my care  
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—  
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,  
With ten picked archers of my train;

With England if the day go hard,  
To Berwick speed amain.—

But if we conquer, cruel maid,  
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,

When here we meet again."  
He waited not for answer there,  
And would not mark the maid's despair,  
Nor heed the discontented look



From either squire, but spurred amain,  
And, dashing through the battle-plain,  
His way to Surrey took.

"The good Lord Marmion, by my life!  
Welcome to danger's hour!"

Short greeting serves in time of strife.—  
Thus have I ranged my power:

Myself will rule this central host,  
Stout Stanley fronts their right,

My sons command the vaward post,  
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;  
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,  
Shall be in rearward of the fight,

And succor those that need it most.

Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,  
Would gladly to the vanguard go;

Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,  
With thee their charge will blithely  
share;

There fight thine own retainers too  
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."

"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said,

Nor further greeting there he paid,

But, parting like a thunderbolt,

First in the vanguard made a halt,

Where such a shout there rose  
Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry,  
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,  
Startled the Scottish foes.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still

With Lady Clare upon the hill,

On which—for far the day was spent—

The western sunbeams now were bent;

Thence the cry they heard, its meaning knew,

Could plain their distant comrades view:

Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,

"Unworthy office here to stay!

No hope of gilded spurs to-day,—

But see! look up—on Flodden bent

The Scottish foe has fired his tent."

And sudden, as he spoke,

From the sharp ridges of the hill,

All downward to the banks of Till,

Was wreathed in sable smoke.

Volumed and vast, and rolling far,

The cloud enveloped Scotland's war

As down the hill they broke:

Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,

Announced their march; their tread

alone,

At times one warning trumpet blown,

At times a stifled hum.

Told England, from his mountain-throne

King James did rushing come.

Scarce could they hear or see their foes

Until at weapon-point they close.—

They close in clouds of smoke and dust,

With sword-sway and with lance's  
thrust;

And such a yell was there,

Of sudden and portentous birth,

As if men fought upon the earth,

And fiends in upper air:

Oh! life and death were in the shout,

Recoil and rally, charge and rout,

And triumph and despair.

Long looked the anxious squires; their  
eye

Could in the darkness nought descry.

At length the freshening western blast

Aside the shroud of battle cast;

And first the ridge of mingled spears

Above the brightening cloud appears,

And in the smoke the pennons flew,

As in the storm the white seamew.

Then marked they, dashing broad and  
far,

The broken billows of the war,

And plumed crests of chieftains brave

Floating like foam upon the wave;

But nought distinct they see:

Wide raged the battle on the plain;

Spears shook and falchions flashed  
amain;

Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;

Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,

Wild and disorderly.

Amid the scene of tumult, high

They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly;

And stainless Tunstall's banner white,

And Edmund Howard's lion bright,

Still bear them bravely in the fight,

Although against them come

Of gallant Gordons many a one,

And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,

And many a rugged Border clan,

With Huntly and with Home.—

Far on the left, unseen the while,

Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle,

Though there the western mountaineer

Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,

And flung the feeble targe aside,

And with both hands the broadsword  
plied.

'T was vain.—But Fortune, on the right,

With fickle smile cheered Scotland's  
fight.

Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell;

Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew

With wavering flight, while fiercer grew

Around the battle-yell.

The Border slogan rent the sky!

A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:



Loud were the clanging blows ;  
Advanced,—forced back,—now low,  
now high,

The pennon sunk and rose ;  
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,  
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,  
It wavered mid the foes.

No longer Blount the view could bear :  
"By heaven and all its saints ! I swear  
I will not see it lost !

Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare  
May bid your beads and patter prayer,—  
I gallop to the host."

And to the fray he rode amain,  
Followed by all the archer train.  
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,  
Made for a space an opening large,—

The rescued banner rose,—  
But darkly closed the war around,  
Like pine-tree rooted from the ground  
It sank among the foes.

Then Eustace mounted too,—yet stayed,  
As loath to leave the helpless maid,

When, fast as shaft can fly,  
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,  
The loose rein dangling from his head,  
Housing and saddle bloody red.

Lord Marmion's steed rushed by :  
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,  
A look and sign to Clara cast  
To mark he would return in haste,  
Then plunged into the fight.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,  
Left in that dreadful hour alone :  
Perchance her reason stoops or reels ;  
Perchance a courage, not her own,  
Braces her mind to desperate tone.—

The scattered van of England wheels ;—  
She only said, as loud in air

The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there ?"—  
They fly, or, maddened by despair,

Fight but to die.—"Is Wilton there ?"  
With that, straight up the hill there rode

Two horsemen drenched with gore,  
And in their arms, a helpless load,

A wounded knight they bore.  
His hand still strained the broken brand ;

His arms where smeared with blood and  
sand.

Dragged from among the horses' feet,  
With dinted shield and helmet beat,  
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,  
Can that be haughty Marmion ! . . .  
Young Blount his armor did unlace,  
And, gazing on his ghastly face,  
Said, "By Saint George, he's gone !  
That spear-wound has our master sped,  
And see the deep cut on his head !

Good-night to Marmion."—  
"Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling  
cease :  
He opes his eyes," said Eustace ;  
"peace !"

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,  
Around gan Marmion wildly stare :  
"Where's Harry Blount ? Fitz-Eustace  
where ?

Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !  
Redeem my pennon,—charge again !  
Cry, 'Marmion to the rescue !'—Vain !  
Last of my race, on battle-plain

That shout shall ne'er be heard again !—  
Yet my last thought is England's—fly.

To Dacre bear my signet-ring :  
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—

Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie :  
Tunstall lies dead upon the field.

His lifeblood stains the spotless shield :  
Edmund is down ; my life is left ;  
The Admiral alone is left.

Let Stanley charge with spur of fire.—  
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,

Full upon Scotland's central host,  
Or victory and England's lost.—

Must I bid twice ?—hence, varlets ! fly !—  
Leave Marmion here alone—to die."

They parted, and alone he lay ;  
Clare drew her from the sight away,

Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,  
And half he murmured, "Is there none

Of all my halls have nurst,  
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring

Of blessed water from the spring,  
To slake my dying thirst !"

O Woman ! in our hours of ease  
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,

And variable as the shade  
By the light quivering aspen made ;

When pain and anguish wring the  
brows,

A ministering angel thou !—  
Scarce were the piteous accents said,

When with the baron's casque the maid  
To the nigh streamlet ran :

Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears ;  
The plaintive voice alone she hears,

Sees but the dying man.  
She stooped her by the runnel's side,

But in abhorrence backward drew ;  
For, oozing from the mountain's side

Where raged the war, a dark-red tide  
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.

Where shall she turn ?—behold her  
mark

A little fountain cell,

Where water, clear as diamond spark,  
In a stone basin fell.  
Above, some half-worn letters say,  
**Drink. weary. pilgrim. drink. and.**  
**pray.**  
**For. the. kind. soul. of. Sibyl. Grey.**  
**Who. built. this. cross. and. well.**  
She filled the helm and back she hied,  
And with surprise and joy espied  
A monk supporting Marmion's head;  
A pious man, whom duty brought  
To dubious verge of battle fought,  
To shrive the dying, bless the dead.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,  
And, as she stooped his brow to lave—  
"Is it the hand of Clare," he said,  
"Or injured Constance, bathes my  
head?"  
Then, as remembrance rose,—  
"Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!  
I must redress her woes.  
Short space, few words, are mine to  
spare;

Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"  
"Alas!" she said, "the while.—  
Oh! think of your immortal weal!  
In vain for Constance is your zeal!  
She—died at Holy Isle."  
Lord Marmion started from the ground  
As light as if he felt no wound,  
Though in the action burst the tide  
In torrents from his wounded side.  
"Then it was truth," he said—"I knew  
That the dark presage must be true.—  
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs  
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,  
Would spare me but a day!  
For wasting fire, and dying groan,  
And priests slain on the altar stone,  
Might bribe him for delay.  
It may not be!—this dizzy trance—  
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,  
And doubly cursed my failing brand!  
A sinful heart makes feeble hand."  
Then fainting down on earth he sunk,  
Supported by the trembling monk.

With fruitless labor Clara bound  
And strove to stanch the gushing  
wound:  
The monk with unavailing cares  
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.  
Ever, he said, that, close and near,  
A lady's voice was in his ear,  
And that the priest he could not hear;  
For that she ever sung.  
"In the lost battle borne down by the fly-  
ing,

*Where mingles war's rattle with groans  
of the dying!"*

So the notes rung.—  
"Avoid thee, Fiend!—with cruel hand  
Shake not the dying sinner's sand!—  
Oh! look, my son, upon yon sign  
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;  
Oh! think on faith and bliss!—  
By many a death-bed I have been,  
And many a sinner's parting seen,  
But never aught like this."  
The war, that for a space did fail,  
Now trebly thundering swelled the  
gale,  
And "Stanley!" was the cry.—  
A light on Marmion's visage spread,  
And fired his glazing eye;  
With dying hand above his head  
He shook the fragment of his blade,  
And shouted "Victory!—  
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley,  
on!"  
Were the last words of Marmion.

By this, though deep the evening fell,  
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,  
For still the Scots around their king,  
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.  
Where's now their victor raward wing,  
Where Huntley, and where Home?—  
Oh! for a blast of that dread horn,  
On Fontarabian echoes borne,  
That to King Charles did come,  
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,  
And every paladin and peer,  
On Roncesvalles died!  
Such blasts might warn them, not in  
vain,  
To quit the plunder of the slain  
And turn the doubtful day again,  
While yet on Flodden side  
Afar the Royal Standard flies,  
And round it toils and bleeds and dies  
Our Caledonian pride!  
In vain the wish—for far away,  
While spoil and havoc mark their way,  
Near Sibyl's Cross the plunderers stray.—  
"O lady," cried the monk, "away!"  
And placed her on her steed,  
And led her to the chapel fair  
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.  
There all the night they spent in prayer,  
And at the dawn of morning there  
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.  
  
But as they left the darkening heath  
More desperate grew the strife of death.  
The English shafts in volleys hailed,  
In headlong charge their horse assailed;

Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons  
sweep

To break the Scottish circle deep

That fought around their king.

But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,  
Though charging knights like whirl-  
winds go,

Though billmen ply the ghastly blow,  
Unbroken was the ring ;

The stubborn spearmen still made good  
Their dark impenetrable wood,

Each stepping where his comrade stood  
The instant that he fell.

No thought was there of dastard flight ;  
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,

Groom fought like noble, squire like  
knight,

As fearlessly and well,  
Till utter darkness closed her wing  
O'er their thin host and wounded king.

Then skilful Surrey's sage commands  
Led back from strife his shattered bands ;

And from the charge they drew,  
As mountain-waves from wasted lands

Sweep back to ocean blue.

Then did their loss his foemen know ;  
Their king, their lords, their mightiest  
low,

They melted from the field, as snow,  
When streams are swoln and south winds  
blow,

Dissolves in silent dew,  
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,

While many a broken band

Disordered through her currents dash,

To gain the Scottish land :

To town and tower, to down and dale,

To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,

And raise the universal wail.

Tradition, legend, tune, and song

Shall many an age that wail prolong ;

Still from the sire the son shall hear

Of the stern strife and carnage drear

Of Flodden's fatal field,

Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear

And broken was her shield !

Day dawns upon the mountain's side.—

There, Scotland ! lay thy bravest pride,

Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one ;

The sad survivors all are gone.—

View not that corpse mistrustfully,

Defaced and mangled though it be ;

Nor to yon Border castle high

Look northward with upbraiding eye :

Nor cherish hope in vain

That, journeying far on foreign strand,

The Royal Pilgrim to his land

May yet return again.

He saw the wreck his rashness wrought :  
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,

And fell on Flodden plain :

And well in death his trusty brand,

Firm clenched within his manly hand,

Beseemed the monarch slain.

But oh ! how changed since yon blithe  
night !—

Gladly I turn me from the sight

Unto my tale again.

Short is my tale :—Fitz-Eustace' care

A pierced and mangled body bare

To moated Lichfield's lofty pile ;

And there, beneath the southern aisle,

A tomb with Gothic sculpture fair

Did long Lord Marmion's image bear.—

Now vainly for its site you look ;

'T was levelled when fanatic Brook

The fair cathedral stormed and took,

But, thanks to Heaven and good Saint  
Chad,

A guerdon meet the spoiler had !—

There erst was martial Marmion found,

His feet upon a couchant hound,

His hands to heaven upraised ;

And all around, on scutcheon rich,

And tablet carved, and fretted niche,

His arms and feats were blazed.

And yet, though all was carved so fair,

And priests for Marmion breathed the

prayer,

The last Lord Marmion lay not there.

From Ettrick woods a peasant swain

Followed his lord to Flodden plain,—

One of those flowers whom plaintive lay

In Scotland mourns as "wede away :"

Sore wounded, Sibyl's Cross he spied,

And dragged him to its foot, and died

Close by the noble Marmion's side.

The spoilers stripped and gashed the

slain,

And thus their corpses were mista'en ;

And thus in the proud baron's tomb

The lowly woodsman took the room.

Less easy task it were to show

Lord Marmion's nameless grave and low

They dug his grave e'en where he lay,

But every mark is gone : .

Time's wasting hand has done away

The simple Cross of Sibyl Grey,

And broke her font of stone ;

But yet from out the little hill

Oozes the slender springlet still.

Oft halts the stranger there.

For thence may best his curious eye

The memorable field descry ;

And shepherd boys repair

To seek the water-flag and rush,  
And rest them by the hazel bush,  
And plait their garlands fair,  
Nor dream they sit upon the grave  
That holds the bones of Marmion  
brave.—

When thou shalt find the little hill,  
With thy heart commune and be still.  
If ever in temptation strong  
Thou left'st the right path for the  
wrong,

If every devious step thus trod  
Still led thee further from the road,  
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom  
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb ;  
But say, "He died a gallant knight,  
With sword in hand, for England's  
right."

I do not rhyme to that dull elf  
Who cannot image to himself  
That all through Flodden's dismal night  
Wilton was foremost in the fight,  
That when brave Surrey's steed was  
slain

'Twas Wilton mounted him again ;  
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hewed  
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood :  
Unnamed by Holinshed or Hall,  
He was the living soul of all ;  
That, after fight, his faith made plain,  
He won his rank and lands again,  
And charged his old paternal shield,  
With bearings won on Flodden Field.  
Nor sing I to that simple maid  
To whom it must in terms be said  
That king and kinsmen did agree  
To bless fair Clara's constancy ;  
Who cannot, unless I relate,  
Paint to her mind the bridal's state,—  
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,  
More, Sands, and Denny, passed the joke ;  
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,  
And Katherine's hand the stocking  
threw ;

And afterwards, for many a day,  
That it was held enough to say,  
In blessing to a wedded pair,  
"Love they like Wilton and like Clare !"

*November, 1806—January, 1808.*  
February 23, 1808.

**SOLDIER, REST! THY WARFARE  
O'ER**

SOLDIER, rest! thy warfare o'er,  
Sleep the sleep that knows not break-  
ing ;  
Dream of battled fields no more,

Days of danger, nights of waking.  
In our isle's enchanted hall,  
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,  
Fairy strains of music fall,  
Every sense in slumber dewing.  
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,  
Dream of fighting fields no more ;  
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,  
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,  
Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,  
Trump nor pibroch summon here  
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.  
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come  
At the daybreak from the fallow,  
And the bitter sound his drum,  
Booming from the sedgy shallow.  
Ruder sounds shall none be near,  
Guards nor warders challenge here,  
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champ-  
ing,  
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done ;  
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,  
Dream not, with the rising sun,  
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.  
Sleep! the deer is in his den ;  
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying :  
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen  
How thy gallant steed lay dying.  
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done ;  
Think not of the rising sun,  
For at dawning to assail ye  
Here no bugles sound reveillé.  
From *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810.

**HAIL TO THE CHIEF WHO IN  
TRIUMPH ADVANCES!**

HAIL to the Chief who in triumph ad-  
vances!  
Honored and blessed be the ever-green  
Pine!  
Long may the tree, in his banner that  
glances,  
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our  
line!  
Heaven send it happy dew,  
Earth lend it sap anew,  
Gayly to burgeon and broadly to grow,  
While every Highland glen  
Sends our shout back again.  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the  
fountain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter to  
fade;  
When the whirlwind has stripped every  
leaf on the mountain,  
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in  
her shade.  
Moored in the rifted rock,  
Proof to the tempest's shock,  
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;  
Menteith and Breadalbane, then  
Echo his praise again,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen  
Fruiin,  
And Bannochair's groans to our slogan  
replied:  
Glen-Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smok-  
ing in ruin,  
And the best of Loch Lomond lie  
dead on her side,  
Widow and Saxon maid  
Long shall lament our raid,  
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and  
with woe;  
Lennox and Leven-glen  
Shake when they hear again,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the  
Highlands!  
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green  
Pine!  
O that the rosebud that graces yon is-  
lands  
Were wreathed in a garland around  
him to twine!  
O that some seedling gem,  
Worthy such noble stem  
Honored and blessed in their shadow  
might grow!  
Loud should Clan-Alpine then  
Ring from her deepmost glen,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

*From The Lady of the Lake.*

#### CORONACH

HE is gone on the mountain,  
He is lost to the forest,  
Like a summer-dried fountain,  
When our need was the sorest.  
The font, reappearing,  
From the rain-drops shall borrow,  
But to us comes no cheering,  
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper  
Takes the ears that are hoary,  
But the voice of the weeper  
Wails manhood in glory.  
The autumn winds rushing  
Waft the leaves that are searest,  
But our flower was in flushing,  
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,  
Sage counsel in cumber,  
Red hand in the foray,  
How sound is thy slumber!  
Like the dew on the mountain,  
Like the foam on the river,  
Like the bubble on the fountain,  
Thou art gone, and forever!  
*From The Lady of the Lake.*

#### HARP OF THE NORTH, FAREWELL!

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills  
grow dark,  
On purple peaks a deeper shade de-  
scending;  
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights  
her spark,  
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert  
wending.  
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain  
lending,  
And the wild breeze, thy wilder min-  
strelsy;  
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers  
blending,  
With distant echo from the fold and  
lea,  
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum  
of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel  
Harp!  
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble  
sway,  
And little reck I of the censure sharp  
May idly cavil at an idle lay.  
Much have I owed thy strains on life's  
long way,  
Through secret woes the world has  
never known.  
When on the weary night dawned  
wearier day,  
And bitterer was the grief devoured  
alone.—  
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress!  
is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow  
retire,



Some spirit of the Air has waked thy string !  
 'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,  
 'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.  
 Receding now, the dying numbers ring  
 Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell ;  
 And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring  
 A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—  
 And now, 'tis silent all !—Enchantress,  
 fare thee well !

Conclusion of *The Lady of the Lake*.

#### BRIGNALL BANKS

During the composition of *Rokeby* Scott wrote to Morritt: "There are two or three Songs, and particularly one in Praise of Brignall Banks, which I trust you will like—because, *entre nous*, I like them myself. One of them is a little dashing banditti song, called and entitled Allen-a-Dale."

O, BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,  
 And Greta woods are green,  
 And you may gather garlands there  
 Would grace a summer queen.  
 And as I rode by Dalton-hall,  
 Beneath the turrets high,  
 A maiden on the castle wall  
 Was singing merrily:  
 "O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,  
 And Greta woods are green;  
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there  
 Than reign our English queen."  
 "If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,  
 To leave both tower and town,  
 Thou first must guess what life lead we  
 That dwell by dale and down.  
 And if thou canst that riddle read,  
 As read full well you may,  
 Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,  
 As blithe as Queen of May."  
 Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,  
 And Greta woods are green;  
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there  
 Than reign our English queen.  
 "I read you, by your bugle horn,  
 And by your palfrey good,  
 I read you for a ranger sworn  
 To keep the king's greenwood."  
 "A ranger, lady, winds his horn,  
 And 'tis at peep of light;  
 His blast is heard at merry morn,  
 And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,  
 And Greta woods are gay;  
 I would I were with Edmund there,  
 To reign his Queen of May !

"With burnished brand and musketoon  
 So gallantly you come,  
 I read you for a bold dragoon,  
 That lists the tuck of drum."  
 "I list no more the tuck of drum,  
 No more the trumpet hear;  
 But when the beetle sounds his hum,  
 My comrades take the spear.  
 And O, though Brignall banks be fair,  
 And Greta woods be gay,  
 Yet mickle must the maiden dare  
 Would reign my Queen of May !

"Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,  
 A nameless death I'll die;  
 The fiend whose lantern lights the mead  
 Were better mate than I !  
 And when I'm with my comrades met  
 Beneath the greenwood bough,  
 What once we were we all forget,  
 Nor think what we are now.  
 Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,  
 And Greta woods are green,  
 And you may gather garlands there  
 Would grace a summer queen."

From *Rokeby*, 1813.

#### ALLEN-A-DALE

ALLEN-a-Dale has no fagot for burning,  
 Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,  
 Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,  
 Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.  
 Come, read me my riddle ! come, hearken  
 my tale !  
 And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale.  
 The Baron of Ravensworth prances in  
 pride,  
 And he views his domains upon Arkin-  
 dale side,  
 The mere for his net and the land for  
 his game,  
 The chase for the wild and the park for  
 the tame:  
 Yet the fish of the lake and the deer of  
 the vale  
 Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-  
 a-Dale !

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,  
 Though his spur be as sharp and his  
 blade be as bright ;

Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,  
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his  
word;  
And the best of our nobles his bonnet  
will vail,  
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore meets  
Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;  
The mother, she asked of his household  
and home:  
"Though the castle of Richmond stand  
fair on the hill,  
My hall," quoth bold Allen, "shows  
gallanter still;  
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its  
crescent so pale  
And with all its bright spangles!" said  
Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel and the mother  
was stone;  
They lifted the latch and they bade him  
be gone;  
But loud on the morrow their wail and  
their cry:  
He had laughed on the lass with his  
bonny black eye,  
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-  
tale,  
And the youth it was told by was Allen-  
a-dale!

From *Rokeby*, 1813.

#### HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY

Hie away, hie away,  
Over bank and over brae,  
Where the copsewood is the greenest,  
Where the fountains glisten sheenest,  
Where the lady-fern grows strongest,  
Where the morning dew lies longest,  
Where the black-cock sweetest sips it,  
Where the fairy latest trips it:  
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,  
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,  
Over bank and over brae,  
Hie away, hie away.

From *Waverley*, 1814.

#### TWIST YE, TWINE YE! EVEN SO

Twist ye, twine ye! even so,  
Mingle shades of joy and woe,  
Hope and fear and peace and strife,  
In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,  
And the infant's life beginning,

Dimly seen through twilight bending,  
Lo, what varied shapes attending!

Passions wild and follies vain,  
Pleasures soon exchanged for pain;  
Doubt and jealousy and fear,  
In the magic dance appear.

Now they wax and now they dwindle,  
Whirling with the whirling spindle,  
Twist ye, twine ye! even so  
Mingle human bliss and woe.

From *Guy Mannering*, 1815.

#### WASTED, WEARY, WHEREFORE STAY

WASTED, weary, wherefore stay,  
Wrestling thus with earth and clay?  
From the body pass away;—  
Hark! the mass is singing.

From thee doff thy mortal weed,  
Mary Mother be thy speed,  
Saints to help thee at thy need;—  
Hark! the knell is ringing.

Fear not snow-drift driving fast,  
Sleet or hail or levin blast;  
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,  
And the sleep be on thee cast  
That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone,  
Earth flits fast, and time draws on,—  
Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy groan,  
Day is near the breaking.

From *Guy Mannering*.

#### JOCK O' HAZELDEAN

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?  
Why weep ye by the tide?  
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,  
And ye sall be his bride:  
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,  
Sae comely to be seen"—  
But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,  
And dry that cheek so pale;  
Young Frank is chief of Errington  
And lord of Langley-dale:  
His step is first in peaceful ha',  
His sword in battle keen"—  
But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,  
Nor braid to bind your hair;  
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,  
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;  
And you, the foremost o' them a',  
Shall ride our forest queen."—  
But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,  
The tapers glimmered fair;  
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,  
And dame and knight are there.  
They sought her baith by bower and ha';  
The ladie was not seen!  
She's o'er the Border and awa'  
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean. 1816.

## PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,  
Pibroch of Donuil,  
Wake thy wild voice anew,  
Summon Clan Conuil.  
Come away, come away,  
Hark to the sunnons!  
Come in your war array,  
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen and  
From mountain so rocky,  
The war-pipe and pennon  
Are at Inverlochy.  
Come every hill-plaid and  
True heart that wears one,  
Come every steel blade and  
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,  
The flock without shelter;  
Leave the corpse uninterred,  
The bride at the altar;  
Leave the deer, leave the steer,  
Leave nets and barges:  
Come with your fighting gear,  
Broadsword and targes.

Come as the winds come when  
Forests are rended;  
Come as the waves come when  
Navies are stranded:  
Faster come, faster come,  
Faster and faster,  
Chief, vassal, page and groom,  
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;  
See how they gather!  
Wide waves the eagle plume,  
Blended with heather.  
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,  
Forward each man set!  
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,  
Knell for the onset! 1816.

## TIME

"WHY sit'st thou by that ruined hall.  
Thou aged carle so stern and gray?  
Dost thou its former pride recall,  
Or ponder how it passed away?"

"Know'st thou not me?" the Deep  
Voice cried:  
"So long enjoyed, so oft misused—  
Alternate, in thy fickle pride,  
Desired, neglected, and accused!

"Before my breath, like blazing flax,  
Man and his marvels pass away!  
And changing empires wane and wax,  
Are founded, flourish, and decay.

"Redeem mine hours—the space is  
brief—  
While in my glass the sand-grains  
shiver,  
And measureless thy joy or grief,  
When Time and thou shalt part for-  
ever!"

From *The Antiquary*, 1816.

## CAVALIER SONG

AND what though winter will pinch  
severe  
Through locks of gray and a cloak  
that's old,  
Yet keep up thy heart, bold cavalier.  
For a cup of sack shall fence the cold.

For time will rust the brightest blade,  
And years will break the strongest  
bow:

Was never wight so starkly made,  
But time and years would overthrow.

From *Old Mortality*, 1816.

## CLARION

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill the fife!  
To all the sensual world proclaim,  
One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.

From *Old Mortality*, 1816.



### THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL

"It was while struggling with such languor, on one lovely evening of this autumn [1817], that he composed the following beautiful verses. They mark the very spot of their birth,—namely, the then naked height overhanging the northern side of the Cauldshields Loch, from which Melrose Abbey to the eastward, and the hills of Ettrick and Yarrow to the west, are now visible over a wide range of rich woodland,—all the work of the poet's hand." Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Chapter 39.

THE sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill  
In Ettrick's vale is sinking sweet;  
The westland wind is hush and still,  
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.  
Yet not the landscape to mine eye  
Bears those bright hues that once it bore,  
Though evening with her richest dye  
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

With listless look along the plain  
I see Tweed's silver current glide,  
And coldly mark the holy fane  
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.  
The quiet lake, the balmy air,  
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree—  
Are they still such as once they were,  
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas! the warped and broken board,  
How can it bear the painter's dye?  
The harp of strained and tuneless chord,  
How to the minstrel's skill reply?  
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,  
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;  
And Araby's or Eden's bowers  
Were barren as this moorland hill.  
1817.

### PROUD MAISIE

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,  
Walking so early;  
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,  
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,  
When shall I marry me?"  
"When six braw gentlemen  
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,  
Birdie, say truly?"

"The gray-headed sexton  
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone  
Shall light thee steady.  
The owl from the steeple sing,  
'Welcome, proud lady.'"  
From *The Heart of Midlothian*, 1818.

### TRUE-LOVE, AN THOU BE TRUE

TRUE-LOVE, an thou be true,  
Thou hast ane kittle part to play,  
For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou  
Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's tale,  
Far better by this heart of mine,  
What time and change of fancy avail,  
A true love-knot to untwine.  
From *The Bride of Lammermoor*, 1819.

### REBECCA'S HYMN

WHEN Israel of the Lord beloved  
Out from the land of bondage came,  
Her fathers' God before her moved,  
An awful guide in smoke and flame.  
By day, along the astonished lands  
The cloudy pillar glided slow;  
By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands  
Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,  
And trump and timbrel answered keen,  
And Zion's daughters poured their lays,  
With priest's and warrior's voice between.  
No portents now our foes amaze,  
Forsaken Israel wanders lone:  
Our fathers would not know Thy ways,  
And Thou hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen,  
When brightly shines the prosperous day,  
Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen  
To temper the deceitful ray!  
And O, when stoops on Judah's path  
In shade and storm the frequent night,  
Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,  
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,  
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;  
No censor round our altar beams,  
And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn,  
But Thou hast said, The blood of goat,  
The flesh of rams I will not prize;

A contrite heart, a humble thought,  
Are mine accepted sacrifice.  
From *Ivanhoe*, 1818.

## BORDER BALLAD

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,  
Why the deil dinna ye march forward  
in order?  
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,  
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for  
the border,  
Many a banner spread,  
Flutters above your head,  
Many a crest that is famous in story,  
Mount and make ready then,  
Sons of the mountain glen,  
Fight for the Queen and our old Scot-  
tish glory.

Come from the hills where your hirsels  
are grazing,  
Come from the glen of the buck and  
the roe;  
Come to the crag where the beacon is  
blazing.  
Come with the buckler, the lance, and  
the bow.  
Trumpets are sounding,  
War-steeds are bounding,  
Stand to your arms and march in good  
order;  
England shall many a day  
Tell of the bloody fray,  
When the Blue Bonnets came over the  
the Border.  
From *The Monastery*, 1820.

## LIFE

YOUTH! thou wear'st to manhood now;  
Darker lip and darker brow,  
Statelier step, more pensive mien,  
In thy face and gait are seen:  
Thou must now brook midnight  
watches,  
Take thy food and sport by snatches!  
For the gambol and the jest  
Thou wert wont to love the best,  
Graver follies must thou follow.  
But as senseless, false, and hollow.  
From *The Abbot*, 1820.

## COUNTY GUY

AH! County Guy, the hour is nigh,  
The sun has left the lea,  
The orange flower perfumes the bower,  
The breeze is on the sea.

The lark his lay who thrilled all day  
Sits hushed his partner nigh:  
Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,  
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the  
shade,  
Her shepherd's suit to hear:  
To beauty shy by lattice high,  
Sings high-born Cavalier.  
The star of Love, all stars above  
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;  
And high and low the influence know—  
But where is County Guy?  
From *Quentin Durward*, 1823.

## BONNY DUNDEE

To the Lords of Convention 't was Clav-  
er'se who spoke,  
"Ere the King's crown shall fall there  
are crowns to be broke;  
So let each Cavalier who loves honor  
and me,  
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dun-  
dee.  
Come fill up my cup, come fill up  
my can,  
Come saddle your horses and call up  
your men;  
Come open the West Port and let  
me gang free,  
And it's room for the bonnets of  
Bonny Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the  
street,  
The bells are rung backward, the drums  
they are beat;  
But the Provost, douce man, said, "Just  
e'en let him be,  
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil  
of Dundee."  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of  
the Bow,  
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her  
pow;  
But the young plants of grace they  
looked couthie and slee,  
Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou  
Bonny Dundee!  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-  
market was crammed,  
As if half the West had set tryst to be  
hanged;

There was spite in each look, there was  
fear in each e'e,  
As they watched for the bonnets of  
Bonny Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cowl's of Kilmarnock had spits  
and had spears,  
And lang-hafted gullies to kill caval-  
liers;  
But they shrunk to close-heads and the  
causeway was free,  
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dun-  
dee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud  
Castle rock,  
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly  
spoke;  
"Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak  
two words or three,  
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny  
Dundee."  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way  
he goes —  
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of  
Montrose!  
Your Grace in short space shall hear  
tidings of me.  
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There are hills beyond Pentland and  
lands beyond Forth,  
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's  
chiefs in the North;  
There are wild Duniewassals three thou-  
sand times three,  
Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barked  
bull-hide;  
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles  
beside;  
The brass shall be burnished, the steel  
shall flash free,  
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dun-  
dee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the  
rocks —  
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the  
fox;  
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst  
of your glee,  
You have not seen the last of my bonnet  
and me!"  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the  
trumpets were blown,  
The kettle-drums clashed and the horse-  
men rode on,  
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Cler-  
miston's lee  
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, come fill up  
my can,  
Come saddle the horses and call up  
the men,  
Come open your gates and let me  
gae free,  
For it's up with the bonnets of  
Bonny Dundee!

*December, 1825. 1830.*

#### HERE'S A HEALTH TO KING CHARLES

BRING the bowl which you boast,  
Fill it up to the brim;  
'T is to him we love most,  
And to all who love him.  
Brave gallants, stand up,  
And avaunt ye, base carles!  
Were there death in the cup,  
Here's a health to King Charles.

Though he wanders through dangers,  
Unaided, unknown,  
Dependent on strangers,  
Estranged from his own;  
Though 't is under our breath,  
Amidst forfeits and perils,  
Here's to honor and faith,  
And a health to King Charles!

Let such honors abound  
As the time can afford,  
The knee on the ground,  
And the hand on the sword;  
But the time shall come round  
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,  
The loud trumpet shall sound,  
Here's a health to King Charles!

*From Woodstock, 1836.*

# BYRON

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## BYRON

### LACHIN Y GAIR

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens  
of roses!  
In you let the minions of luxury rove;  
Restore me the rocks, where the snow-  
flake reposes,  
Though still they are sacred to freedom  
and love:  
Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy moun-  
tains,  
Round their white summits though  
elements war;  
Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-  
flowing fountains,  
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na  
Garr.

Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy  
wander'd;  
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was  
the plaid;  
On chieftains long perish'd my memory  
ponder'd,  
As daily I strode through the pine-  
cover'd glade;  
I sought not my home till the day's  
dying glory  
Gave place to the rays of the bright  
polar star;  
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional  
story,  
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch  
na Garr.

"Shades of the dead! have I not heard  
your voices  
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the  
gale?"  
Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,  
And rides on the wind, o'er his own  
Highland vale.  
Round Loch na Garr while the stormy  
mist gathers,  
Winter presides in his cold icy car:  
Clouds there encircle the forms of my  
fathers;  
They dwell in the tempests of dark  
Loch na Garr.

"Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions  
foreboding  
Tell you that fate had forsaken your  
cause?"  
Ah! were you destined to die at Culloden,  
Victory crown'd not your fall with  
applause:  
Still were you happy in death's earthly  
slumber,  
You rest with your clan in the caves of  
Braemar;  
The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud  
number,  
Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch  
na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since  
I left you,  
Years must elapse ere I tread you  
again:  
Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft  
you,  
Yet still are you dearer than Albion's  
plain.  
England! thy beauties are tame and  
domestic  
To one who has roved o'er the moun-  
tains afar:  
Oh for the crags that are wild and  
majestic!  
The steep frowning glories of dark  
Loch na Garr. 1807.<sup>1</sup>

### MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

*Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ*

MAID of Athens, ere we part,  
Give, oh, give me back my heart!  
Or, since that has left my breast,  
Keep it now, and take the rest!  
Hear my vow before I go,  
*Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

<sup>1</sup>The dates for Byron's poems are made up chiefly from the very full accounts of their writing and publication given in the notes to E. E. Coleridge's splendid edition.

By those tresses unconfined,  
Woo'd by each Ægean wind ;  
By those lids whose jetty fringes  
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge ;  
By those wild eyes like the roe,  
*Ζῶη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

By that lip I long to taste ;  
By that zone-encircled waist ;  
By all the token-flowers that tell  
What words can never speak so well ;  
By love's alternate joy and woe,  
*Ζῶη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

Maid of Athens ! I am gone :  
Think of me, sweet ! when alone.  
Though I fly to Istambol,  
Athens holds my heart and soul ;  
Can I cease to love thee ? No !  
*Ζῶη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.* 1810. 1812.

#### AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR

" *Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari  
quam tui meminisse !*"

AND thou art dead, as young and fair  
As aught of mortal birth ;  
And form so soft, and charms so rare,  
Too soon return'd to Earth !  
Though Earth received them in her bed  
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread  
In carelessness or mirth,  
There is an eye which could not brook  
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,  
Nor gaze upon the spot ;  
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,  
So I behold them not :  
It is enough for me to prove  
That what I loved, and long must love,  
Like common earth can rot ;  
To me there needs no stone to tell,  
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last  
As fervently as thou,  
Who didst not change through all the  
past,  
And canst not alter now.  
The love where Death has set his seal,  
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,  
Nor falsehood disavow :  
And, what were worse, thou canst not  
see  
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours ;  
The worst can be but mine ;  
The sun that cheers, the storm that  
lowers,  
Shall never more be thine.  
The silence of that dreamless sleep  
I envy now too much to weep ;  
Nor need I to repine,  
That all those charms have pass'd away ;  
I might have watch'd through long  
decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd  
Must fall the earliest prey ;  
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,  
The leaves must drop away ;  
And yet it were a greater grief  
To watch it withering leaf by leaf,  
Than see it pluck'd to-day ;  
Since earthly eye but ill can bear  
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne  
To see thy beauties fade ;  
The night that follow'd such a morn  
Had worn a deeper shade ;  
Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,  
And thou wert lovely to the last ;  
Extinguish'd, not decay'd ;  
As stars that shoot along the sky  
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,  
My tears might well be shed,  
To think I was not near to keep  
One vigil o'er thy bed ;  
To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,  
To fold thee in a faint embrace,  
Uphold thy drooping head ;  
And show that love, however vain,  
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,  
Though thou hast left me free,  
The loveliest things that still remain,  
Than thus remember thee !  
The all of thine that cannot die  
Through dark and dread Eternity  
Returns again to me,  
And more thy buried love endears  
Than aught except its living years.  
*February, 1812.* 1812.

#### WHEN WE TWO PARTED

WHEN we two parted  
In silence and tears,  
Half broken-hearted  
To sever for years,



Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
Colder thy kiss;  
Truly that hour foretold  
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning  
Sunk chill on my brow—  
It felt like the warning  
Of what I feel now.  
Thy vows are all broken,  
And light is thy fame:  
I hear thy name spoken,  
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,  
A knell to mine ear;  
A shudder comes o'er me—  
Why wert thou so dear?  
They know not I knew thee,  
Who knew thee too well:  
Long, long shall I rue thee,  
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—  
In silence I grieve,  
That thy heart could forget,  
Thy spirit deceive.  
If I should meet thee  
After long years,  
How should I greet thee?—  
With silence and tears.

f . . . . 1816.

### THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS

#### A TURKISH TALE

"Had we never loved so kindly,  
Had we never loved so blindly,  
Never met or never parted,  
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."—BURNS.

#### CANTO THE FIRST

KNOW ye the land where the cypress and  
myrtle  
Are emblems of deeds that are done in  
their clime?  
Where the rage of the vulture, the love  
of the turtle,  
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to  
crime!  
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,  
Where the flowers ever blossom, the  
beams ever shine:  
Where the light wings of Zephyr, op-  
press'd with perfume,  
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gûl in her  
bloom;  
Where the citron and olive are fairest of  
fruit,

And the voice of the nightingale never  
is mute:  
Where the tints of the earth, and the  
hues of the sky,  
In color though varied, in beauty may  
vie,  
And the purple of ocean is deepest in  
dye;  
Where the virgins are soft as the roses  
they twine,  
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?  
'T is the clime of the East; 't is the land  
of the Sun—  
Can he smile on such deeds as his chil-  
dren have done?  
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' fare-  
well  
Are the hearts which they bear, and the  
tales which they tell.

Begirt with many a gallant slave,  
Apparell'd as becomes the brave,  
Awaiting each his lord's behest  
To guide his steps, or guard his rest,  
Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:  
Deep thought was in his aged eye;  
And though the face of Mussulman  
Not oft betrays to standers by  
The mind within, well skill'd to hide  
All but unconquerable pride,  
His pensive cheek and pondering brow  
Did more than he was wont avow.

"Let the chamber be clear'd."—The  
train disappear'd.—

"Now call me the chief of the Haram  
guard."

With Giaffir is none but his only son,  
And the Nubian awaiting the sire's  
award.

"Haroun—when all the crowd that wait  
Are pass'd beyond the outer gate,  
(Woe to the head whose eye beheld  
My child Zuleika's face unveil'd!)  
Hence, lead my daughter from her  
tower;

Her fate is fix'd this very hour:  
Yet not to her repeat my thought;  
By me alone be duty taught!"

"Pacha! to hear is to obey."  
No more must slave to despot say—  
Then to the tower had ta'en his way,  
But here young Selim silence brake,  
First lowly rendering reverence meet;  
And downcast look'd and gently spake,  
Still standing at the Pacha's feet:  
For son of Moslem must expire,  
Ere dare to sit before his sire!

"Father! for fear that thou shouldst  
 chide  
 My sister, or her sable guide,  
 Know—for the fault, if fault there be,  
 Was mine, then fall thy frowns on me—  
 So lovelily the morning shone,  
 That—let the old and weary sleep—  
 I could not; and to view alone  
 The fairest scenes of land and deep,  
 With none to listen and reply  
 To thoughts with which my heart beat  
 high  
 Were irksome—for whate'er my mood,  
 In sooth I love not solitude;  
 On Zuleika's slumber broke,  
 And, as thou knowest that for me  
 Soon turns the Haram's grating key,  
 Before the guardian slaves awoke  
 We to the cypress groves had flown,  
 And made earth, main, and heaven our  
 own!  
 There linger'd we, beguiled too long  
 With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;  
 Till I, who heard the deep tambour  
 Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,  
 To thee, and to my duty true,  
 Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee  
 flew;  
 But there Zuleika wanders yet—  
 Nay, Father, rage not—nor forget  
 That none can pierce that secret bower  
 But those who watch the woman's  
 tower."  
 "Son of a slave"—the Pacha said—  
 "From unbelieving mother bred,  
 Vain were a father's hope to see  
 Aught that becomes a man in thee.  
 Thou, when thine arm should bend the  
 bow,  
 And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,  
 Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,  
 Must pore where babbling waters flow,  
 And watch unfolding roses blow.  
 Would that yon orb, whose matin glow  
 Thy listless eyes so much admire,  
 Would lend thee something of his fire!  
 Thou, who wouldst see this battlement  
 By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;  
 Nay, tamely view old Stamboul's wall  
 Before the dogs of Moscow fall,  
 Nor strike one stroke for life and death  
 Against the curs of Nazareth!  
 Go—let thy less than woman's hand  
 Assume the distaff—not the brand.  
 But, Haroun!—to my daughter speed!  
 And hark—of thine own head take heed—  
 If thus Zuleika oft takes wing—  
 Thou see'st yon bow—it hath a string!"

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,  
 At least that met old Giafir's ear.  
 But every frown and every word  
 Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.  
 "Son of a slave!—reproach'd with  
 fear!  
 Those gibes had cost another dear.  
 Son of a slave!—and *who* my sire?"  
 Thus held his thoughts their dark  
 career;  
 And glances ev'n of more than ire  
 Flash forth, then faintly disappear.  
 Old Giafir gazed upon his son  
 And started; for within his eye  
 He read how much his wrath had done;  
 He saw rebellion there begun:  
 "Come hither, boy—what, no reply?  
 I mark thee—and I know thee too;  
 But there be deeds thou dar'st not do;  
 But if thy beard had manlier length,  
 And if thy hand had skill and strength,  
 I'd joy to see thee break a lance,  
 Albeit against my own perchance."

As sneeringly these accents fell,  
 On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed;  
 That eye return'd his glance for glance  
 And proudly to his sire's was raised,  
 Till Giafir's quail'd and shrunk as-  
 kance—  
 And why—he felt, but durst not tell.  
 "Much I misdoubt this wayward boy  
 Will one day work me more annoy;  
 I never loved him from his birth,  
 And—but his arm is little worth,  
 And scarcely in the chase could cope  
 With timid fawn or antelope,  
 Far less would venture into strife  
 Where man contends for fame and life—  
 I would not trust that look or tone;  
 No—nor the blood so near my own.  
 That blood—he hath not heard—no  
 more—  
 I'll watch him closer than before.  
 He is an Arab to my sight,  
 Or Christian crouching in the fight—  
 But hark!—I hear Zuleika's voice;  
 Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear;  
 She is the offspring of my choice;  
 Oh! more than ev'n her mother dear,  
 With all to hope, and nought to fear—  
 My Peri! ever welcome here!  
 Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave  
 To lips just cool'd in time to save—  
 Such to my longing sight art thou;  
 Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine  
 More thanks for life, than I for thine.  
 Who blest thy birth and bless thee  
 now."

Fair, as the first that fell of womankind,  
 When on that dread yet lovely serpent  
 smiling,  
 Whose image then was stamp'd upon  
 her mind—  
 But once beguil'd—and ever more be-  
 guiling;  
 Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent  
 vision  
 To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber  
 given,  
 When heart meets heart again in dreams  
 Elysian,  
 And paints the lost on Earth revived  
 in Heaven;  
 Soft, as the memory of buried love;  
 Pure, as the prayer which Childhood  
 wafts above  
 Was she—the daughter of that rude old  
 Chief,  
 Who met the maid with tears—but not  
 of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words  
 essay  
 To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly  
 ray?  
 Who doth not feel, until his failing  
 sight  
 Faints into dimness with its own de-  
 light,  
 His changing cheek, his sinking heart  
 confess  
 The might, the majesty of Loveliness?  
 Such was Zuleika, such around her  
 shone  
 The nameless charms unmark'd by her  
 alone—  
 The light of love, the purity of grace,  
 The mind, the Music breathing from  
 her face,  
 The heart whose softness harmonized  
 the whole,  
 And oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending  
 Across her gently budding breast;  
 At one kind word those arms extending  
 To clasp the neck of him who blest  
 His child caressing and carest,  
 Zuleika came—and Giaffir felt  
 His purpose half within him melt:  
 Not that against her fancied weal  
 His heart though stern could ever feel;  
 Affection chain'd her to that heart;  
 Ambition tore the links apart.

"Zuleika! child of gentleness!  
 How dear this very day must tell,

When I forget my own distress,  
 In losing what I love so well,  
 To bid thee with another dwell:  
 Another! and a braver man  
 Was never seen in battle's van.  
 We Moslem reck not much of blood;  
 But yet the line of Carasman  
 Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood  
 First of the bold Timariot bands  
 That won and well can keep their lands.  
 Enough that he who comes to woo  
 Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:  
 His years need scarce a thought employ;  
 I would not have thee wed a boy.  
 And thou shalt have a noble dower:  
 And his and my united power  
 Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,  
 Which others tremble but to scan,  
 And teach the messenger what fate  
 The bearer of such boon may wait.  
 And now thou know'st thy father's will:  
 All that thy sex hath need to know:  
 'T was mine to teach obedience still—  
 The way to love, thy lord may show."

In silence bow'd the virgin's head;  
 And if her eye was fill'd with tears  
 That stifled feeling dare not shed,  
 And changed her cheek from pale to  
 red,  
 And red to pale, as through her ears  
 Those winged words like arrows sped,  
 What could such be but maiden fears?  
 So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,  
 Love half regrets to kiss it dry;  
 So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,  
 Even Pity scarce can wish it less!  
 Whate'er it was the sire forgot;  
 Or if remember'd, mark'd it not;  
 Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his  
 steed,  
 Resign'd his gem-adorn'd chibouque,  
 And mounting featly for the mead,  
 With Maugrabee and Mamaluke,  
 His way amid his Delis took,  
 To witness many an active deed  
 With sabre keen, or blunt jerreed.  
 The Kislar only and his Moors  
 Watch well the Haram's massy doors.

His head was leant upon his hand,  
 His eye look'd o'er the dark blue  
 water  
 That swiftly glides and gently swells  
 Between the winding Dardanelles;  
 But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,  
 Nor even his Pacha's turban'd band  
 Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,  
 Careering cleave the folded felt,

With sabre stroke right sharply dealt;  
Nor mark'd the javelin-darting crowd—  
Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud—  
He thought but of old Giaffir's  
daughter!

No word from Selim's bosom broke;  
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke;  
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,  
Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.  
To him Zuleika's eye was turn'd,  
But little from his aspect learn'd:  
Equal her grief, yet not the same;  
Her heart confess'd a gentler flame:  
But yet that heart, alarm'd or weak,  
She knew not why, forbade to speak.  
Yet speak she must—but when essay?  
"How strange he thus should turn  
away!

Not thus we e'er before have met;  
Nor thus shall be our parting yet."  
Thrice paced she slowly through the  
room.

And watch'd his eye—it still was fix'd;  
She snatch'd the urn wherein was  
mix'd

The Persian Atar-gul's perfume,  
And sprinkled all its odors o'er  
The pictured roof and marble floor:  
The drops, that through his glittering  
vest

The playful girl's appeal address'd,  
Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,  
As if that breast were marble too.  
"What, sullen yet? it must not be—  
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!"

She saw in curious order set  
The fairest flowers of eastern land—  
"He loved them once: may touch them  
yet,

If offer'd by Zuleika's hand."  
The childish thought was hardly brea-  
thed

Before the rose was pluck'd and wrea-  
thed;

The next fond moment saw her seat  
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:

"This rose to calm my brother's cares  
A message from the Bulbul bears;

It says to-night he will prolong  
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;

And though his note is somewhat sad,  
He'll try for once a strain more glad,  
With some faint hope his alter'd lay  
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

"What! not receive my foolish flower?  
Nay then I am indeed unblest;  
On me can thus thy forehead lower?

And know'st thou not who loves thee  
best?

Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!  
Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?  
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,  
And I will kiss thee into rest,  
Since words of mine, and songs must  
fail,

Ev'n from my fabled nightingale.  
I knew our sire at times was stern,  
But this from thee had yet to learn:  
Too well I know he loves thee not;  
But is Zuleika's love forgot?

Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan—  
This kinsman Bey of Carasman  
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine.  
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,—

If shrines that ne'er approach allow  
To woman's step, admit her vow,—  
Without thy free consent, command,  
The Sultan should not have my hand!  
Think'st thou that I could bear to part  
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?  
Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,  
Where were thy friend—and who my  
guide?

Years have not seen, Time shall not see,  
The hour that tears my soul from thee:  
Ev'n Azrael, from his deadly quiver

When flies that shaft, and fly it must,  
That parts all else, shall doom for ever  
Our hearts to undivided dust!"

He lived, he breathed, he moved, he felt;  
He raised the maid from where she  
knelt;

His trance was gone, his keen eye shone  
With thoughts that long in darkness  
dwelt:

With thoughts that burn—in rays that  
melt.

As the stream late conceal'd  
By the fringe of its willows,

When it rushes reveal'd  
In the light of its billows;

As the bolt bursts on high  
From the black cloud that bound it,  
Flash'd the soul of that eye

Through the long lashes round it.  
A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,  
A lion roused by heedless hound,

A tyrant waked to sudden strife  
By graze of ill-directed knife,  
Starts not to more convulsive life

Than he, who heard that vow, display'd,  
And all, before repress'd, betray'd:

"Now thou art mine, for ever mine,  
With life to keep, and scarce with life  
resign;



Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,  
Though sworn by one, hath bound us  
both.

Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done ;  
That vow hath saved more heads than  
one :

But blench not thou—thy simplest tress  
Claims more from me than tenderness ;  
I would not wrong the slenderest hair  
That clusters round thy forehead fair,  
For all the treasures buried far  
Within the caves of Istakar.

This morning clouds upon me lower'd,  
Reproaches on my head were shower'd,  
And Giaffir almost call'd me coward !  
Now I have motive to be brave ;

The son of his neglected slave,  
Nay, start not, 'twas the term he gave,  
May show, though little apt to vaunt,  
A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.  
*His* son, indeed !—yet, thanks to thee,  
Perchance I am, at least shall be ;  
But let our plighted secret vow  
Be only known to us as now.

I know the wretch who dares demand  
From Giaffir thy reluctant hand ;  
More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul  
Holds not a Musselim's control :

Was he not bred in Egripo ?  
A viler race let Israel show !  
But let that pass—to none be told  
Our oath ; the rest shall time unfold.  
To me and mine leave Osman Bey ;  
I've partisans for peril's day :  
Think not I am what I appear ;  
I've arms, and friends, and vengeance  
near."

"Think not thou art what thou appearst !  
My Selim, thou art sadly changed :  
This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest ;  
But now thou'rt from thyself es-  
tranged.

My love thou surely knew'st before,  
It ne'er was less, nor can be more.  
To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,  
And hate the night I know not why,  
Save that we meet not but by day ;

With thee to live, with thee to die,  
I dare not to my hope deny :  
Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,  
Like this—and this—no more than this ;  
For, Allah ! sure thy lips are flame :

What fever in thy veins is flushing ?  
My own have nearly caught the same,  
At least I feel my cheek, too, blushing.  
To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,  
Partake, but never waste thy wealth,  
Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,

And lighten half thy poverty ;  
Do all but close thy dying eye,  
For that I could not live to try ;  
To these alone my thoughts aspire :  
More can I do ? or thou require ?  
But, Selim, thou must answer why  
We need so much of mystery ?  
The cause I cannot dream nor tell,  
But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well ;  
Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and  
'friends,'

Beyond my weaker sense extends.  
I meant that Giaffir should have heard  
The very vow I plighted thee ;  
His wrath would not revoke my word :  
But surely he would leave me free.  
Can this fond wish seem strange in  
me,

To be what I have ever been ?  
What other hath Zuleika seen  
From simple childhood's earliest hour ?

What other can she seek to see  
Than thee, companion of her bower,  
The partner of her infancy ?

These cherish'd thoughts with life begun,  
Say, why must I no more avow ?  
What change is wrought to make me  
shun

The truth ; my pride, and thine till  
now ?

To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes  
Our law, our creed, our God denies ;  
Nor shall one wandering thought of mine  
At such, our Prophet's will, repine :  
No ! happier made by that decree,  
He left me all in leaving thee.

Deep were my anguish, thus compell'd  
To wed with one I ne'er beheld :  
This wherefore should I not reveal ?  
Why wilt thou urge me to conceal ?  
I know the Pacha's haughty mood  
To thee hath never boded good ;  
And he so often storms at nought,  
Allah ! forbid that e'er he ought !  
And why I know not, but within  
My heart concealment weighs like sin.

If then such secrecy be crime,  
And such it feels while lurking here ;

Oh, Selim ! tell me yet in time,

Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.

Ah ! yonder see the Tchocadar,  
My father leaves the mimic war ;  
I tremble now to meet his eye—  
Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why ?"

"Zuleika—to thy tower's retreat  
Betake thee—Giaffir I can greet !  
And now with him I fain must prate  
Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.

There's fearful news from Danube's banks,

Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,  
For which the Giaour may give him thanks!

Our Sultan hath a shorter way  
Such costly triumph to repay.

But, mark me, when the twilight drum  
Hath warn'd the troops to food and sleep,

Unto thy cell will Selim come:  
Then softly from the Haram creep

Where we may wander by the deep:  
Our garden battlements are steep;

Nor these will rash intruder climb  
To list our words, or stint our time;

And if he doth, I want not steel  
Which some have felt, and more may feel.

Then shalt thou learn of Selim more  
Than thou hast heard or thought before:

Trust me, Zuleika—fear not me!  
Thou know'st I hold a Haram key."

"Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now  
Did word like this—"

"Delay not thou:

I keep the key—and Haroun's guard  
Have some, and hope of more reward.

To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear  
My tale, my purpose, and my fear:

I am not, love! what I appear."

#### CANTO THE SECOND

The winds are high on Helle's wave,  
As on that night of stormy water

When Love, who sent, forgot to save  
The young, the beautiful, the brave.

The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.  
Oh! when alone along the sky

Her turret-torch was blazing high,  
Though rising gale, and breaking foam,

And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him  
home:

And clouds aloft and tides below,  
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,

He could not see, he would not hear,  
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;

His eye but saw that light of love,  
The only star it hail'd above;

His ear but rang with Hero's song,  
"Ye waves, divide not lovers long!"—

That tale is old, but love anew  
May nerve young hearts to prove as

true.

The winds are high, and Helle's tide  
Rolls darkly heaving to the main;

And Night's descending shadows hide  
That field with blood bedew'd in

vain,  
The desert of old Priam's pride;

The tombs, sole relics of his reign,  
All—save immortal dreams that could

beguile  
The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

Oh! yet—for there my steps have been;  
These feet have press'd the sacred

shore,  
These limbs that buoyant wave hath

borne—  
Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,

To trace again those fields of yore,  
Believing every hillock green

Contains no fabled hero's ashes,  
And that around the undoubted scene

Thine own "broad Hellespont" still  
dashes,

Be long my lot! and cold were he  
Who there could gaze denying thee!

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,  
Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill

That moon, which shone on his high  
theme:

No warrior chides her peaceful beam  
But conscious shepherds bless it still.

Their flocks are grazing on the mound  
Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow:

That mighty heap of gather'd ground  
Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,

By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,  
Is now a lone and nameless barrow!

Within—thy dwelling-place how nar-  
row!

Without—can only strangers breathe  
The name of him that *was* beneath:

Dust long outlasts the storied stone;  
But Thou—thy very dust is gone!

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer  
The swain, and chase the boatman's

fear;  
Till then—no beacon on the cliff

May shape the course of struggling skiff;  
The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,

All, one by one, have died away;  
The only lamp of this lone hour

Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.  
Yes! there is light in that lone chamber,

And o'er her silken ottoman  
Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,

O'er which her fairy fingers ran;  
Near these, with emerald rays beset,

(How could she thus that gem forget?)  
Her mother's sainted amulet,

Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,  
 Could smooth this life, and win the  
 next ;  
 And by her comboloio lies  
 A Koran of illumined dyes ;  
 And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme  
 By Persian scribes redeem'd from time ;  
 And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,  
 Reclines her now neglected lute ;  
 And round her lamp of fretted gold  
 Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould ;  
 The richest work of Iran's loom,  
 And Sheeraz, tribute of perfume ;  
 All that can eye or sense delight  
 Are gather'd in that gorgeous room :  
 But yet it hath an air of gloom  
 She, of this Peri cell the sprite,  
 What doth she hence, and on so rude a  
 night ?

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,  
 Which none save noblest Moslem wear,  
 To guard from winds of heaven the  
 breast  
 As heaven itself to Selim dear,  
 With cautious steps the thicket thread-  
 ing,  
 And starting off, as through the glade  
 The gust its hollow moanings made,  
 Till on the smoother pathway treading,  
 More free her timid bosom beat,  
 The maid pursued her silent guide ;  
 And though her terror urged retreat,  
 How could she quit her Selim's side ?  
 How teach her tender lips to chide ?

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn  
 By nature, but enlarged by art,  
 Where oft her lute she wont to tune,  
 And oft her Koran conn'd apart ;  
 And oft in youthful reverie  
 She dream'd what Paradise might be :  
 Where woman's parted soul shall go  
 Her Prophet had disdain'd to show ;  
 But Selim's mansion was secure,  
 Nor deem'd she, could he long endure  
 His bower in other worlds of bliss  
 Without *her*, most beloved in this !  
 Oh ! who so dear with him could dwell ?  
 What Houri soothe him half so well ?

Since last she visited the spot  
 Some change seem'd wrought within the  
 grot :  
 It might be only that the night  
 Disguised things seen by better light :  
 That brazen lamp but dimly threw  
 A ray of no celestial hue ;  
 But in a nook within the cell

Her eye on stranger objects fell.  
 There arms were piled, not such as wield  
 The turban'd Delis in the field ;  
 But brands of foreign blade and hilt,  
 And one was red—perchance with guilt !  
 Ah ! how without can blood be spilt ?  
 A cup too on the board was set  
 That did not seem to hold sherbet.  
 What may this mean ? she turn'd to see  
 Her Selim—" Oh ! can this be he ? "

His robe of pride was thrown aside,  
 His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,  
 But in its stead a shawl of red,  
 Wreathed lightly round, his temples  
 wore :

That dagger, on whose hilt the gem  
 Were worthy of a diadem,  
 No longer glitter'd at his waist,  
 Where pistols unadorn'd were braced ;  
 And from his belt a sabre swung,  
 And from his shoulder loosely hung  
 The cloak of white, the thin capote  
 That decks the wandering Candiote ;  
 Beneath—his golden plated vest  
 Clung like a cuirass to his breast ;  
 The greaves below his knee that wound  
 With silvery scales were sheathed and  
 bound.

But were it not that high command  
 Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,  
 All that a careless eye could see  
 In him was some young Galiongé.<sup>1</sup>

" I said I was not what I seem'd ;  
 And now thou see'st my words were  
 true :  
 I have a tale thou hast not dream'd,  
 If sooth—its truth must others rue.  
 My story now 't were vain to hide,  
 I must not see thee Osman's bride :  
 But had not thine own lips declared  
 How much of that young heart I shared,  
 I could not, must not, yet have shown  
 The darker secret of my own.  
 In this I speak not now of love ;  
 That, let time, truth, and peril prove :  
 But first—Oh ! never wed another—  
 Zuleika ! I am not thy brother ! "

" Oh ! not my brother !—yet unsay—  
 God ! am I left alone on earth  
 To mourn—I dare not curse—the day  
 That saw my solitary birth ?  
 Oh ! thou wilt love me now no more !  
 My sinking heart foreboded ill ;  
 But know me all I was before,

<sup>1</sup> A Turkish sailor.

Thy sister—friend—Zuleika still.  
 Thou led'st me here perchance to kill;  
 If thou hast cause for vengeance, see!  
 My breast is offer'd—take thy fill!  
 Far better with the dead to be  
 Than live thus nothing now to thee!  
 Perhaps far worse, for now I know  
 Why Giaffir alway seem'd thy foe;  
 And I, alas! am Giaffir's child,  
 For whom thou wert condemn'd, reviled.  
 If not thy sister—wouldst thou save  
 My life, oh! bid me be thy slave!"

"My slave, Zuleika!—nay, I'm thine:  
 But, gentle love, this transport calm,  
 Thy lot shall yet be link'd with mine;  
 I wear it by our Prophet's shrine,  
 And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.

So may the Koran verse display'd  
 Upon its steel direct my blade,  
 In danger's hour to guard us both,  
 As I preserve that awful oath!  
 The name in which thy heart hath prided  
 Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,  
 That tie is widen'd, not divided,  
 Although thy Sire's my deadliest foe.  
 My father was to Giaffir all

That Selim late was deem'd to thee:  
 That brother wrought a brother's fall,  
 But spared, at least, my infancy;  
 And lull'd me with a vain deceit  
 That yet a like return may meet.  
 He rear'd me, not with tender help,  
 But like the nephew of a Cain:  
 He watched me like a lion's whelp,  
 That gnaws and yet may break his chain.

My father's blood in every vein  
 Is boiling; but for thy dear sake  
 No present vengeance will I take;  
 Though here I must no more remain.  
 But first, beloved Zuleika! hear  
 How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

"How first their strife to rancor grew,  
 If love or envy made them foes,  
 It matters little if I knew;  
 In fiery spirits, slights, though few  
 And thoughtless, will disturb repose.  
 In war Abdallah's arm was strong,  
 Remember'd yet in Bosnia song,  
 And Paswan's rebel hordes attest  
 How little love they bore such guest:  
 His death is all I need relate,  
 The stern effect of Giaffir's hate;  
 And how my birth disclosed to me,  
 What'er beside it makes, hath made me free.

"When Paswan, after years of strife,  
 At last for power, but first for life,  
 In Widdin's walls too proudly sate,  
 Our Pachas rallied round the state;  
 Nor last nor least in high command,  
 Each brother led a separate band;  
 They gave their horse-tails<sup>1</sup> to the wind,  
 And mustering in Sophia's plain  
 Their tents were pitch'd, their post as-  
 sign'd;

To one, alas! assign'd in vain!  
 What need of words! the deadly bowl,  
 By Giaffir's order drugged and given,  
 With venom subtle as his soul,  
 Dismiss'd Abdallah's hence to heaven.  
 Reclined and feverish in the bath,  
 He, when the hunter's sport was up,  
 But little deem'd a brother's wrath  
 To quench his thirst had such a cup:  
 The bowl a bribed attendant bore;  
 He drank one draught, nor needed more!  
 If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,  
 Call Haroun—he can tell it out.

"The deed once done, and Paswan's feud  
 In part suppress'd, though ne'er subdued,  
 Abdallah's Pachalick was gain'd:—  
 Thou know'st not what in our Divan  
 Can wealth procure for worse than man—  
 Abdallah's honors were obtain'd  
 By him a brother's murder stain'd;  
 'T is true, the purchase nearly drain'd  
 His ill got treasure, soon replaced.  
 Wouldst question whence? Survey the waste,

And ask the squalid peasant how  
 His gains repay his broiling brow!—  
 Why me the stern usurper spared,  
 Why thus with me his palace shared,  
 I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,  
 And little fear from infant's force;  
 Besides, adoption as a son  
 By him whom Heaven accorded none,  
 Or some unknown cabal, caprice,  
 Preserved me thus;—but not in peace:  
 He cannot curb his haughty mood,  
 Nor I forgive a father's blood.

"Within thy father's house are foes;  
 Not all who break his bread are true;  
 To these should I my birth disclose.  
 His days, his very hours were few;  
 They only want a heart to lead,  
 A hand to point them to the deed.  
 But Haroun only knows, or knew,  
 This tale, whose close is almost nigh:

<sup>1</sup> "Horse-tail," the standard of a pacha.  
 (Byron.)



He in Abdallah's palace grew,  
 And held that post in his Serai  
 Which holds he here—he saw him die ;  
 But what could single slavery do ?  
 Avenge his lord ? alas ! too late ;  
 Or save his son from such a fate ?  
 He chose the last, and when elate  
 With foes subdued, or friends betray'd,  
 Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,  
 He led me helpless to his gate,  
 And not in vain it seems essay'd  
 To save the life for which he pray'd.  
 The knowledge of my birth secured  
 From all and each, but most from me ;  
 Thus Giaffir's safety was insured.  
 Removed he too from Roumelie  
 To this our Asiatic side,  
 Far from our seats by Danube's tide,  
 With none but Haroun, who retains  
 Such knowledge—and that Nubian feels  
 A tyrant's secrets are but chains,  
 From which the captive gladly steals,  
 And this and more to me reveals :  
 Such still to guilt just Alla sends—  
 Slaves, tools, accomplices—no friends !

“ All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds ;  
 But harsher still my tale must be :  
 Howe'er my tongue thy softness wounds,  
 Yet I must prove all truth to thee.  
 I saw thee start this garb to see,  
 Yet is it one I oft have worn,  
 And long must wear : this Galiongée,  
 To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,  
 Is leader of those pirate hordes,  
 Whose laws and lives are on their  
 swords ;  
 To hear whose desolating tale  
 Would make thy waning cheek more  
 pale :  
 Those arms thou see'st my band have  
 brought.  
 The hands that wield are not remote ;  
 This cup too for the rugged knaves  
 Is fill'd—once quaff'd, they ne'er repine :  
 Our prophet might forgive the slaves :  
 They're only infidels in wine.

“ What could I be ? Proscribed at home,  
 And taunted to a wish to roam ;  
 And listless left—for Giaffir's fear  
 Denied the courser and the spear—  
 Though oft—Oh, Mahomet ! how oft—  
 In full Divan the despot scoff'd,  
 As if my weak unwilling hand  
 Refused the bridle or the brand :  
 He ever went to war alone,  
 And pent me here untried—unknown ;  
 To Haroun's care with women left,

By hope unblest, of fame bereft,  
 While thou—whose softness long en-  
 dear'd,  
 Though it unmann'd me, still had  
 cheer'd—

To Brusa's walls for safety sent,  
 Awaited'st there the field's event.  
 Haroun, who saw my spirit pining  
 Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,  
 His captive, though with dread resign-  
 ing,

My thralldom for a season broke,  
 On promise to return before  
 The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.  
 'T is vain—my tongue cannot impart  
 My almost drunkenness of heart,  
 When first this liberated eye  
 Survey'd Earth, Ocean, Sun, and Sky,  
 As if my spirit pierced them through,  
 And all their inmost wonders knew !  
 One word alone can paint to thee  
 That more than feeling—I was Free !  
 E'en for thy presence ceased to pine :  
 The World—nay, Heaven itself was  
 mine !

“ The shallop of a trusty Moor  
 Convey'd me from this idle shore ;  
 I long'd to see the isles that gem  
 Old Ocean's purple diadem :  
 I sought by turns, and saw them all ;  
 But when and where I join'd the  
 crew,  
 With whom I'm pledged to rise or fall,  
 When all that we design to do  
 Is done, 't will then be time more meet  
 To tell thee, when the tale's complete.

“ 'T is true, they are a lawless brood,  
 But rough in form, nor mild in mood ;  
 And every creed, and every race,  
 With them hath found—may find a  
 place ;  
 But open speech, and ready hand,  
 Obedience to their chief's command ;  
 A soul for every enterprise,  
 That never sees with terror's eyes ;  
 Friendship for each, and faith to all,  
 And vengeance vow'd for those who fall,  
 Have made them fitting instruments  
 For more than ev'n my own intents.  
 And some—and I have studied all  
 Distinguish'd from the vulgar rank,  
 But chiefly to my council call  
 The wisdom of the cautious Frank—  
 And some to higher thoughts aspire,  
 The last of Lambro's patriots there  
 Anticipated freedom share ;  
 And oft around the cavern fire

On visionary schemes debate,  
 To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.  
 So let them ease their hearts with prate  
 Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;  
 I have a love for freedom too.  
 Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam  
 Or only know on land the Tartar's home!  
 My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,  
 Are more than cities and Serais to me:  
 Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,  
 Across the desert, or before the gale,  
 Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or  
 glide, my prow!  
 But be the star that guides the wanderer,  
 Thou!  
 Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my  
 bark;  
 The Dove of peace and promise to mine  
 ark!  
 Or, since that hope denied in worlds of  
 strife,  
 Be thou the rainbow to the storms of  
 life!  
 The evening beam that smiles the clouds  
 away,  
 And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!  
 Blest—as the Muezzin's strain from Mec-  
 ca's wall  
 To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his  
 call;  
 Soft—as the melody of youthful days,  
 That steals the trembling tear of speech-  
 less praise;  
 Dear—as his native song to Exile's ears,  
 Shall sound each tone thy long-loved  
 voice endears.  
 For thee in those bright isles is built a  
 bower  
 Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.  
 A thousand swords, with Selim's heart  
 and hand,  
 Wait—wave—defend—destroy—at thy  
 command!  
 Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,  
 The spoil of nations shall bedeck my  
 bride.  
 The Haram's languid years of listless ease  
 Are well resign'd for cares—for joys like  
 these:  
 Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,  
 Unnumber'd perils—but one only love!  
 Yet well my toils shall that fond breast  
 repay,  
 Though fortune frown, or falser friends  
 betray.  
 How dear the dream in darkest hours  
 of ill,  
 Should all be changed, to find thee faith-  
 ful still!

Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly  
 shown;  
 To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;  
 To soothe each sorrow: share in each de-  
 light,  
 Blend every thought, do all—but dis-  
 unite!  
 Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to  
 guide;  
 Friends to each other, foes to aught be-  
 side:  
 Yet there we follow but the bent assign'd  
 By fatal Nature to man's warring kind:  
 Mark! where his carnage and his con-  
 quests cease!  
 He makes a solitude, and calls it—peace!  
 I, like the rest, must use my skill or  
 strength,  
 But ask no land beyond my sabre's  
 length:  
 Power sways but by division—her re-  
 source  
 The blest alternative of fraud or force!  
 Ours be the last; in time deceit may  
 come  
 When cities cage us in a social home:  
 There ev'n thy soul might err—how oft  
 the heart  
 Corruption shakes which peril could not  
 part!  
 And woman, more than man, when  
 death or woe,  
 Or even Disgrace, would lay her lover  
 low,  
 Sunk in the lap of Luxury will shame—  
 Away suspicion!—*not* Zuleika's name!  
 But life is hazard at the best; and here  
 No more remains to win, and much to  
 fear:  
 Yes, fear! the doubt, the dread of los-  
 ing thee,  
 By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern  
 decree.  
 That dread shall vanish with the favour-  
 ing gale,  
 Which Love to-night hath promised to  
 my sail:  
 No danger daunts the pair his smile hath  
 blest,  
 Their steps still roving, but their hearts  
 at rest.  
 With thee all toils are sweet, each clime  
 hath charms;  
 Earth—sea alike—our world within our  
 arms!  
 Ay—let the loud winds whistle o'er the  
 deck,  
 So that those arms cling closer round  
 my neck:

The deepest murmur of this lip shall be,  
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!  
The war of elements no fears impart  
To Love, whose deadliest bane is human  
Art:

*There* lie the only rocks our course can  
check;

*Here* moments menace—*there* are years  
of wreck!

But hence ye thoughts that rise in Hor-  
ror's shape!

This hour bestows, or ever bars, escape.  
Few words remain of mine my tale to  
close;

Of thine but *one* to waft us from our  
foes;

Yea—foes—to me will Giaffir's hate de-  
cline?

And is not Osman, who would part us,  
thine?

"His head and faith from doubt and  
death

Return'd in time my guard to save;  
Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave

From isle to isle I roved the while;

And since, though parted from my band,

Too seldom now I leave the land,

No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,

Ere I have heard and doom'd it too:

I form the plan, decree the spoil,

'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.

But now too long I've held thine ear;

Time presses, floats my bark, and here

We leave behind but hate and fear.

To-morrow Osman with his train

Arrives—to-night must break thy chain:

And wouldst thou save that haughty

Bey,—

Perchance *his* life who gave thee

thine,—

With me this hour away—away!

But yet, though thou art plighted

mine,

Wouldst thou recall thy willing vow,

Appall'd by truths imparted now,

Here rest I—not to see thee wed:

But be that peril on *my* head!"

Zuleika, mute and motionless,

Stood like that statue of distress,

When, her last hope for ever gone,

The mother harden'd into stone:

All in the maid that eye could see

Was but a younger Niobé.

But ere her lip, or even her eye,

Essay'd to speak, or look reply,

Beneath the garden's wicket porch

Far flash'd on high a blazing torch!

Another—and another—and another—  
"Oh! fly—no more—yet now my more  
than brother!"

Far, wide, through every thicket spread  
The fearful lights are gleaming red;  
Nor these alone—for each right hand  
Is ready with a sheathless brand.

They part, pursue, return, and wheel  
With searching flambeau, shining steel;

And last of all, his sabre waving,  
Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:

And now almost they touch the cave—  
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

Dauntless he stood—"Tis come—soon  
past—

One kiss, Zuleika—'tis my last:

But yet my band not far from shore

May hear this signal, see the flash;

Yet now too few—the attempt were  
rash:

No matter—yet one effort more."

Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;

His pistol's echo rang on high,

Zuleika started not, nor wept,

Despair benumb'd her breast and  
eye!—

"They hear me not, or if they ply

Their oars 'tis but to see me die;

That sound hath drawn my foes more  
nigh.

Then forth my father's scimitar,

Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!

Farewell, Zuleika!—sweet! retire:

Yet stay within—here linger safe,

At thee his rage will only chafe.

Stir not—lest even to thee perchance

Some erring blade or ball should glance.

Fear'st thou for him?—may I expire

If in this strife I seek thy sire!

No—though by him that poison pour'd;

No—though again he call me coward!

But tamely shall I meet their steel?

No—as each crest save *his* may feel!"

One bound he made, and gain'd the  
sand:

Already at his feet hath sunk

The foremost of the prying band,

A gasping head, a quivering trunk:

Another falls—but round him close

A swarming circle of his foes;

From right to left his path he cleft,

And almost met the meeting wave:

His boat appears—not five oars' length—

His comrades strain with desperate  
strength—

Oh! are they yet in time to save?

His feet the foremost breakers lave;

His band are plunging in the bay,  
 Their sabres glitter through the spray;  
 Wet—wild—unwearied to the strand  
 They struggle—now they touch the land!  
 They come—'tis but to add to slaughter—  
 His heart's best blood is on the water.

Escaped from shot, unharm'd by steel,  
 Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,  
 Had Selim won, betray'd, beset,  
 To where the strand and billows met;  
 There as his last step left the land—  
 And the last death-blow dealt his hand—  
 Ah! wherefore did he turn to look  
 For her his eye but sought in vain?  
 That pause, that fatal gaze he took,  
 Hath doom'd his death, or fix'd his  
 chain.

Sad proof, in peril and in pain,  
 How late will Lover's hope remain!  
 His back was to the dashing spray:  
 Behind, but close, his comrades lay.  
 When, at the instant, hiss'd the ball—  
 "So may the foes of Giaffir fall!"  
 Whose voice is heard? whose carbine  
 rang?

Whose bullet through the night-air sang,  
 Too nearly, deadly aim'd to err?  
 'Tis thine—Abdallah's Murderer!  
 The father slowly rued thy hate,  
 The son hath found a quicker fate:  
 Fast from his breast the blood is bub-  
 bling,  
 The whiteness of the sea-foam trou-  
 bling—  
 If aught his lips essay'd to groan,  
 The rushing billows choked the tone!

More slowly rolls the clouds away;  
 Few trophies of the fight are there:  
 The shouts that shook the midnight-bay  
 Are silent; but some signs of fray  
 That strand of strife may bear,  
 And fragments of each shiver'd brand  
 Are stamp'd; and dash'd into the sand  
 The print of many a struggling hand  
 May there be mark'd; nor far remote  
 A broken torch, an oarless boat;  
 And tangled on the weeds that heap  
 The beach where shelving to the deep  
 There lies a white capote!  
 'Tis rent in twain—one dark-red stain  
 The wave yet ripples o'er in vain;  
 But where is he who wore?  
 Ye! who would o'er his relics weep,  
 Go, seek them where the surges sweep  
 Their burthen round Sigæum's steep  
 And cast on Lemnos' shore:  
 The sea-birds shriek above the prey,

O'er which their hungry beaks delay,  
 As shaken on his restless pillow,  
 His head heaves with the heaving  
 billow;  
 That hand, whose motion is not life,  
 Yet feebly seems to menace strife,  
 Flung by the tossing tide on high,  
 Then levell'd with the wave—  
 What reck's it, though that corse shall  
 lie

Within a living grave?  
 The bird that tears that prostrate form  
 Hath only robb'd the meaner worm;  
 The only heart, the only eye  
 Had bled or wept to see him die,  
 Had seen those scatter'd limbs composed,  
 And mourn'd above his turban-stone,  
 That heart hath burst—that eye was  
 closed—

Yea—closed before his own!

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!  
 And woman's eye is wet—man's cheek  
 is pale:

Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,  
 Thy destined lord is come too late:  
 He sees not—ne'er shall see thy face!  
 Can he not hear  
 The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant  
 ear?

Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,  
 The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,  
 The silent slaves with folded arms that  
 wait,  
 Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the  
 gale,

Tell him thy tale!  
 Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!  
 That fearful moment when he left the  
 cave

Thy heart grew chill:  
 He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—  
 thine all,

And that last thought on him thou  
 couldst not save  
 Sufficed to kill;

Burst forth in one wild cry—and all was  
 still.

Peace to thy broken heart, and virgin  
 grave!

Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!  
 That grief—though deep—though fatal—  
 was thy first!

Thrice happy ne'er to feel nor fear the  
 force

Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge,  
 remorse!

And, oh! that pang where more than  
 madness lies!

The worm that will not sleep—and never dies ;  
 Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,  
 That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light,  
 That winds around, and tears the quivering heart !  
 Ah ! wherefore not consume it—and depart !  
 Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief !  
   Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head,  
   Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost spread :  
   By that same hand Abdallah—Selim : bled.  
 Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief .  
 Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's bed,  
 She, whom thy sultan had but seen to wed,  
   Thy Daughter's dead !  
   Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely beam,  
   The Star hath set that shone on Helle's stream.  
 What quench'd its ray ?—the blood that thou hast shed !  
 Hark ! to the hurried question of Despair :  
 " Where is my child ?"—an Echo answers—" Where ?"  
 Within the place of thousand tombs  
   That shine beneath, while dark above  
 The sad but living cypress glooms  
   And withers not, though branch and leaf  
 Are stamp'd with an eternal grief,  
   Like early unrequited Love,  
 One spot exists, which ever blooms,  
   Ev'n in that deadly grove—  
 A single rose is shedding there  
   Its lonely lustre, meek and pale :  
 It looks as planted by Despair—  
   So white—so faint—the slightest gale  
 Might whirl the leaves on high :  
   And yet, though storms and blight assail,  
 And hands more rude than wintry sky  
   May wring it from the stem—in vain—  
   To-morrow sees it bloom again :  
 The stalk some spirit gently rears,  
 And waters with celestial tears,  
   For well may maids of Helle deem  
 That this can be no earthly flower,  
 Which mocks the tempest's withering hour,  
 And buds unshelter'd by a bower ;

Nor droops though Spring refuse her shower,  
 Nor woos the summer beam :  
 To it the livelong night there sings  
   A bird unseen—but not remote :  
 Invisible his airy wings,  
 But soft as harp that Houri strings  
   His long entrancing note !  
 It were the Bulbul ; but his throat,  
   Though mournful, pours not such a strain :  
 For they who listen cannot leave  
 The spot, but linger there and grieve,  
   As if they loved in vain !  
 And yet so sweet the tears they shed,  
 'Tis sorrow so unmix'd with dread,  
 They scarce can bear the morn to break  
   That melancholy spell,  
 And longer yet would weep and wake,  
   He sings so wild and well !  
 But when the day-blush bursts from high  
   Expires that magic melody.  
 And some have been who could believe,  
 (So fondly youthful dreams deceive,  
   Yet harsh be they that blame,)  
 That note so piercing and profound  
   Will shape and syllable its sound  
   Into Zuleika's name.  
 'Tis from her cypress summit heard,  
 That melts in air the liquid word :  
 'Tis from her lowly virgin earth  
 That white rose takes its tender birth.  
 There late was laid a marble stone ;  
 Eve saw it placed—the Morrow gone !  
 It was no mortal arm that bore  
 That deep-fix'd pillar to the shore ;  
 For there, as Helle's legends tell,  
 Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell ;  
 Lash'd by the tumbling tide, whose wave  
 Denied his bones a holier grave ;  
 And there by night, reclined, 't is said,  
 Is seen a ghastly turban'd head :  
   And hence extended by the billow,  
   'Tis named the " Pirate-phantom's pillow !"  
   Where first it lay that mourning flower  
   Hath flourish'd ; flourisheth this hour,  
 Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale :  
 As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale !  
 November, 1813.   November 29, 1813.

#### ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

" *Expende Annibalem :—quot libras in duc summo invenies ?*"—Juvenal, *Sat. x.*

'T is done—but yesterday a King !  
 And arm'd with Kings to strive—

Thou art a nameless thing :  
—yet alive !  
Man of thousand thrones,  
'd our earth with hostile  
He thus survive ?  
Is called the Morning Star,  
A fiend hath fallen so far.

Man ! why scourge thy kind  
'd so low the knee ?  
In thyself grown blind,  
Ghastly the rest to see.  
It unquestion'd,—power to  
—  
Gift hath been the grave,  
That worshipp'd thee ;  
Why fall could mortals guess  
Less than littleness !

That lesson—It will teach  
Warriors more,  
Philosophy can preach,  
Why preach'd before.  
Upon the minds of men  
To unite again,  
Them to adore  
In things of sabre sway  
Of brass, and feet of clay.

And the vanity,  
Re of the strife—  
Take voice of Victory,  
The breath of life ;  
The sceptre, and that sway  
Seem'd made but to obey,  
Thy renown was rife—  
—Dark Spirit ! what must be  
Of thy memory !

Or desolate !  
Or overthrown !  
Of others' fate  
Not for his own !  
At imperial hope  
Such change can calmly cope ?  
Of death alone ?  
Nec—or live a slave—  
Is most ignobly brave !

Old would rend the oak,  
Not of the rebound :  
The trunk he vainly broke—  
How look'd he round ?  
The sternness of thy strength,  
Hast done at length,  
Thy fate hast found :  
Forest prowlers' prey ;  
Hast eat thy heart away !

The Roman, when his burning heart  
Was slaked with blood of Rome,  
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,  
In savage grandeur, home—  
He dared depart in utter scorn  
Of men that such a yoke had borne,  
Yet left him such a doom !  
His only glory was that hour  
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard,<sup>1</sup> when the lust of sway  
Had lost its quickening spell,  
Cast crowns for rosaries away,  
An empire for a cell ;  
A strict accountant of his beads,  
A subtle disputant on creeds,  
His dotage trifled well :  
Yet better had he neither known  
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand  
The thunderbolt is wrung—  
Too late thou leav'st the high command  
To which thy weakness clung ;  
All Evil Spirit as thou art,  
It is enough to grieve the heart  
To see thine own unstrung ;  
To think that God's fair world hath been  
The footstool of a thing so mean ;

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,  
Who thus can hoard his own !  
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling  
limb,  
And thank'd him for a throne !  
Fair Freedom ! we may hold thee dear,  
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear  
In humblest guise have shown.  
Oh ! ne'er may tyrant leave behind  
A brighter name to lure mankind !

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,  
Nor written thus in vain—  
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,  
Or deepen every stain :  
If thou hadst died as honor dies,  
Some new Napoleon might arise,  
To shame the world again—  
But who would soar the solar height,  
To set in such a starless night ?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust  
Is vile as vulgar clay ;  
Thy scales, Mortality ! are just  
To all that pass away :  
But yet methought the living great  
Some higher sparks should animate,  
To dazzle and dismay :

<sup>1</sup> The Emperor Charles V.

Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make  
mirth  
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful  
flower,

Thy still imperial bride ;  
How bears her breast the torturing  
hour ?

Still clings she to thy side ?  
Must she too bend, must she too share  
Thy late repentance, long despair,  
Thou throneless Homicide ?  
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,—  
'T is worth thy vanish'd diadem !

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,  
And gaze upon the sea ;  
That element may meet thy smile—  
It ne'er was ruled by thee !  
Or trace with thine all idle hand  
In loitering mood upon the sand  
That Earth is now as free !  
That Corinth's pedagogue<sup>1</sup> hath now  
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour ! in his captive's cage  
What thoughts will there be thine,  
While brooding in thy prison'd rage ?  
But one—"The world was mine !"   
Unless, like he of Babylon,  
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,  
Life will not long confine  
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—  
So long obey'd—so little worth !

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,  
Wilt thou withstand the shock ?  
And share with him, the unforgiven,  
His vulture and his rock !  
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,  
And that last act, though not thy worst,  
The very Fiend's arch mock ;  
He in his fall preserved his pride  
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died !

There was a day—there was an hour,  
While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—  
When that immeasurable power  
Unsated to resign  
Had been an act of purer fame  
Than gathers round Marengo's name,  
And gilded thy decline,  
Through the long twilight of all time,  
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

<sup>1</sup> Dionysius the younger, tyrant of Syracuse, who after his second banishment earned his living by teaching, in Corinth.

But thou forsooth must be a king,  
And don the purple vest,  
As if that foolish robe could wring  
Remembrance from thy breast.  
Where is that faded garment ? where  
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,  
The star, the string, the crest ?  
Vain froward child of empire ! say,  
Are all thy playthings snatched away ?

Where may the wearied eye repose  
When gazing on the Great ;  
Where neither guilty glory glows,  
Nor despicable state ?  
Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—  
The Cincinnatus of the West,  
Whom envy dared not hate,  
Bequeath'd the name of Washington,  
To make man blush there was but one !  
*April 9-10, 1814. April 16, 1814.*

#### SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;  
And all that's best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :  
Thus mellow'd to that tender light  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
Had half impair'd the nameless grace  
Which waves in every raven tress,  
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;  
Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
How pure, how dear their dwelling-  
place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
The smiles that win, the tints that  
glow,  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,  
A heart whose love is innocent !  
*June 12, 1814. 1815 -*

#### OH ! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

OH ! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,  
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb  
But on thy turf shall roses rear  
Their leaves, the earliest of the year ;  
And the wild cypress wave in tender  
gloom :

And oft by yon blue gushing stream  
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,

And feed deep thought with many a dream.  
And lingering pause and lightly tread :  
Fond wretch ! as if her step disturb'd the dead !

Away ! we know that tears are vain.  
That death nor heeds nor hears distress :

Will this unteach us to complain ?

Or make one mourner weep the less ?

And thou—who tell'st me to forget,

Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

1814 or 1815. April 23, 1815.

#### THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf  
on the fold.

And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold :

And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea.

When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green.

That host with their banners at sunset were seen :

Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown.

That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,

And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd ;

And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill.

And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still !

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide.

But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride ;

And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,

And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale.

With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail :

And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,

And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;

And the might of the Gentile, unsmeared by the sword,

Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

February 17, 1815. 1815.

#### SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

WARRIORS and chiefs ! should the shaft or the sword

Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,

Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :

Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,

Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,

Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !

Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part.

Heir to my royalty, son of my heart !

Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,

Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day !

1815. 1815.

#### STANZAS FOR MUSIC

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
Ducentium ortus ex animo : quater  
Felix ! in limbo qui scatentem  
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."  
GRAY'S *Poemata*.

THERE's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away.

When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay ;

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,

But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness



Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or  
ocean of excess ;  
The magnet of their course is gone, or  
only points in vain  
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall  
never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like  
death itself comes down ;  
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not  
dream its own ;  
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the foun-  
tain of our tears,  
And though the eye may sparkle still, 't is  
where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips,  
and mirth distract the breast,  
Through midnight hours that yield no  
more their former hope of rest ;  
'T is but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd  
turret wreath,  
All green and wildly fresh without, but  
worn and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what  
I have been,  
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er  
many a vanish'd scene ;  
As springs in deserts found seem sweet,  
all brackish though they be,  
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those  
tears would flow to me.

March, 1815. 1816.

#### FARE THEE WELL

"Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;  
But whispering tongues can poison truth  
And constancy lives in realms above ;  
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;  
And to be wroth with one we love,  
Doth work like madness in the brain ;

But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining—  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;  
A dreary sea now flows between,  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*.

FARE thee well ! and if for ever,  
Still for ever, fare thee well :  
Even though unforgiving, never  
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee  
Where thy head so oft hath lain,  
While that placid sleep came o'er thee  
Which thou ne'er canst know again :

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,  
Every inmost thought could show !  
Then thou wouldst at last discover  
'T was not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend  
thee—

Though it smile upon the blow,  
Even its praises must offend thee,  
Founded on another's woe :

Though my many faults defaced me,  
Could no other arm be found,  
Than the one which once embraced me,  
To inflict a cureless wound ?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;  
Love may sink by slow decay,  
But by sudden wrench, believe not  
Hearts can thus be torn away :

Still thine own its life retaineth.  
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;  
And the undying thought which paineth  
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow  
Than the wail above the dead ;  
Both shall live, but every morrow  
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,  
When our child's first accents flow,  
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father !"   
Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hands shall press thee,  
When her lip to thine is press'd,  
Think of him whose prayer shall bless  
thee,  
Think of him thy love had bless'd !

Should her lineaments resemble  
Those thou never more may'st see,  
Then thy heart will softly tremble  
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,  
All my madness none can know ;  
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,  
Wither, yet with thee they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken ;  
Pride, which not a world could bow,  
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,  
Even my soul forsakes me now :

But 't is done—all words are idle—  
Words from me are vainer still ;  
But the thoughts we cannot bridle  
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! thus disunited,  
Torn from every nearer tie,  
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,  
More than this I scarce can die.  
*March 18, 1816. April 4, 1816.*

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters  
With a magic like thee;  
And like music on the waters  
Is thy sweet voice to me:  
When, as if its sound were causing  
The charmed ocean's pausing,  
The waves lie still and gleaming,  
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming;

And the midnight moon is weaving  
Her bright chain o'er the deep;  
Whose breast is gently heaving,  
As an infant's asleep:  
So the spirit bows before thee,  
To listen and adore thee;  
With a full but soft emotion,  
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.  
*March 28, 1816. 1816.*

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE  
CANTO THE THIRD

"Afin que cette application vous forçât de  
penser à autre chose; il n'y a en vérité de remède  
que celui-là et le temps." *Lettre du Roi de  
Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.*

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair  
child!  
ADA! sole daughter of my house and  
heart?  
When last I saw thy young blue eyes  
they smiled,  
And then we parted,—not as now we  
part,  
But with a hope.—  
Awaking with a start,  
The waters heave around me; and on  
high  
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,  
Whither I know not; but the hour's  
gone by,  
When Albion's lessening shores could  
grieve or glad mine eye.  
Once more upon the waters! yet once  
more!  
And the waves bound beneath me as a  
steed  
That knows his rider. Welcome to their  
roar!

Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it  
lead!  
Though the strain'd mast should quiver  
as a reed,  
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the  
gale,  
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,  
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to  
sail  
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tem-  
pest's breath prevail.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,  
The wandering outlaw of his own dark  
mind;  
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,  
And bear it with me, as the rushing  
wind  
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I  
find  
The furrows of long thought, and dried-  
up tears,  
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track be-  
hind.  
O'er which all heavily the journeying  
years  
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a  
flower appears.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or  
pain,  
Perchance my heart and harp have lost  
a string,  
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain  
I would essay as I have sung to sing.  
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I  
cling:  
So that it wean me from the weary dream  
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling  
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem  
To me, though to none else, a not un-  
grateful theme.

He, who grown aged in this world of  
woe,  
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths  
of life,  
So that no wonder waits him; nor below  
Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition,  
strife,  
Cut to his heart again with the keen  
knife  
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell  
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves,  
yet rife  
With airy images, and shapes which  
dwell  
Still unimpaired, though old, in the soul's  
haunted cell.

'T is to create, and in creating live  
 A being more intense that we endow  
 With form our fancy, gaining as we give  
 The life we image, even as I do now.  
 What am I? Nothing: but not so art  
 thou,  
 Soul of my thought! with whom I tra-  
 verse earth,  
 Invisible but gazing, as I glow  
 Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy  
 birth,  
 And feeling still with thee in my crush'd  
 feelings' dearth.

Yet must I think less wildly;—I *have*  
 thought  
 Too long and darkly, till my brain be-  
 came,  
 In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought.  
 A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:  
 And thus, untaught in youth my heart  
 to tame,  
 My springs of life were poison'd. 'T is  
 too late!  
 Yet am I changed; though still enough  
 the same  
 In strength to bear what time cannot  
 abate,  
 And feed on bitter fruits without ac-  
 cusing Fate.

Something too much of this:—but now  
 't is past,  
 And the spell closes with its silent seal.  
 Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;  
 He of the breast which fain no more  
 would feel,  
 Wrung with the wounds which kill not  
 but ne'er heal;  
 Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd  
 him  
 In soul and aspect as in age: years steal  
 Fire from the mind as vigor from the  
 limb;  
 And life's enchanted cup but sparkles  
 near the brim.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he  
 found  
 The dregs were wormwood,—but he  
 fill'd again,  
 And from a purer fount, on holier ground  
 And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in  
 vain!  
 Still round him clung invisibly a chain  
 Which gall'd for ever, fettering though  
 unseen,  
 And heavy though it clank'd not; worn  
 with pain,

Which pined although it spoke not, and  
 grew keen,  
 Entering with every step he took through  
 many a scene.

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd  
 Again in faucied safety with his kind,  
 And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd  
 And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind,  
 That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;  
 And he, as one, might 'midst the many  
 stand  
 Unheeded, searching through the crowd  
 to find  
 Fit speculation; such as in strange land  
 He found in wonder-works of God and  
 Nature's hand.

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor  
 seek  
 To wear it? who can curiously behold  
 The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's  
 cheek,  
 Nor feel the heart can never all grow  
 old?  
 Who can contemplate Fame through  
 clouds unfold  
 The star which rises o'er her steep, nor  
 climb?  
 Harold, once more within the vortex,  
 roll'd  
 On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,  
 Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's  
 fond prime.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit  
 Of men to herd with Man: with whom he  
 held  
 Little in common: untaught to submit  
 His thoughts to others, though his soul  
 was quell'd  
 In youth by his own thoughts; still un-  
 compell'd,  
 He would not yield dominion of his  
 mind  
 To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;  
 Proud though in desolation; which  
 could find  
 A life within itself, to breathe without  
 mankind.

Where rose the mountains, there to him  
 were friends:  
 Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his  
 home;  
 Where a blue sky, and glowing clime,  
 extends,  
 He had the passion and the power to  
 roam:

The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,  
Were unto him companionship; they  
spake  
A mutual language, clearer than the  
tome  
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft  
forsake  
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams  
on the lake.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the  
stars,  
Till he had peopled them with beings  
bright  
As their own beams; and earth, and  
earthborn jars,  
And human frailties, were forgotten  
quite:  
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight  
He had been happy; but this clay will  
sink  
Its spark immortal, envying it the light  
To which it mounts, as if to break the  
link  
That keeps us from yon heaven which  
woos us to its brink.

But in Man's dwellings he became a  
thing  
Restless and worn, and stern and weari-  
some,  
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt  
wing,  
To whom the boundless air alone were  
home:  
Then came his fit again, which to o'er-  
come,  
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat  
His breast and beak against his wiry  
dome  
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the  
heat  
Of his impeded soul would through his  
bosom eat.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,  
With nought of hope left, but with less  
of gloom;  
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,  
That all was over on this side the tomb,  
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,  
Which, though 't were wild,—as on the  
plunder'd wreck  
When mariners would madly meet their  
doom  
With draughts intemperate on the sink-  
ing deck,—  
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore  
to check.

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's  
dust!  
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred  
below!

Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?  
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?  
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler  
so,

As the ground was before, thus let it  
be:—

How that red rain hath made the harvest  
grow!

And is this all the world has gain'd by  
thee,

Thou first and last of fields! king-making  
Victory?

And Harold stands upon this place of  
skulls,

The grave of France, the deadly Water-  
loo!

How in an hour the power which gave  
annuls

Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting  
too;

In "pride of place" here last the eagle  
flew,

Then tore with bloody talon the rent  
plain,

Pierced by the shaft of banded nations  
through;

Ambition's life and labors all were vain;  
He wears the shatter'd links of the  
world's broken chain.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the  
bit

And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more  
free?

Did nations combat to make *One* sub-  
mit;

Or league to teach all kings true sov-  
ereignty?

What! shall reviving Thralldom again  
be

The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?  
Shall we, who struck the Lion down,

shall we  
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly  
gaze

And servile knees to thrones? No;  
*prove* before ye praise!

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no  
more!

In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with  
hot tears

For Europe's flowers long rooted up  
before

The trampler of her vineyards; in vain  
 years  
 Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,  
 Have all been borne, and broken by the  
 accord  
 Of roused-up millions; all that most  
 endears  
 Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a  
 sword  
 Such as Harmodius drew on Athens'  
 tyrant lord.

There was a sound of revelry by night  
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd  
 then  
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and  
 brave men;  
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and  
 when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which  
 spake again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;  
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes  
 like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the  
 wind,  
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony  
 street;  
 On with the dance! let joy be uncon-  
 fined;  
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and  
 Pleasure meet  
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying  
 feet—  
 But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in  
 once more,  
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than be-  
 fore!  
 Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's  
 opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high  
 hall  
 Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he  
 did hear  
 That sound the first amidst the fes-  
 tival,  
 And caught its tone with Death's pro-  
 phetic ear;  
 And when they smiled because he  
 deem'd it near,  
 His heart more truly knew that peal  
 too well  
 Which stretch'd his father on a bloody  
 bier,

And roused the vengeance blood alone  
 could quell;  
 He rush'd into the field, and, foremost  
 fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to  
 and fro,  
 And gathering tears, and tremblings  
 of distress,  
 And cheeks all pale, which but an  
 hour ago  
 Blush'd at the praise of their own love-  
 liness;  
 And there were sudden partings, such  
 as press  
 The life from out young hearts, and  
 choking sighs  
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who  
 could guess  
 If ever more should meet those mutual  
 eyes,  
 Since upon night so sweet such awful  
 morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste:  
 the steed,  
 The mustering squadron, and the clat-  
 tering car,  
 Went pouring forward with impetuous  
 speed,  
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of  
 war;  
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;  
 And near, the beat of the alarming  
 drum  
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning  
 star;  
 While throng'd the citizens with ter-  
 ror dumb,  
 Or whispering, with white lips—"The  
 foe, they come! they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's  
 gathering" rose!  
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's  
 hills  
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her  
 Saxon foes:—  
 How in the noon of night that pibroch  
 thrills,  
 Savage and shrill! But with the breath  
 which fills  
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the moun-  
 taineers  
 With the fierce native daring which  
 instils  
 The stirring memory of a thousand  
 years,  
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each  
 clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her  
green leaves,

Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they  
pass.

Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,  
Over the unreturning brave.—alas!  
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass  
Which now beneath them, but above  
shall grow

In its next verdure, when this fiery mass  
Of living valor, rolling on the foe  
And burning with high hope shall  
moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,  
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,  
The midnight brought the signal-sound  
of strife.

The morn the marshalling in arms,—  
the day

Battle's magnificently stern array!  
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which  
when rent

The earth is cover'd thick with other  
clay,

Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd  
and pent,

Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one  
red burial blent!

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps  
than mine:

Yet one I would select from that proud  
throng,

Partly because they blend me with his  
line,

And partly that I did his sire some wrong,  
And partly that bright names will hallow  
song;

And his was of the bravest, and when  
shower'd

The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd  
files along.

Even where the thickest of war's tem-  
pest lower'd.

They reach'd no nobler breast than thine,  
young gallant Howard!

There have been tears and breaking  
hearts for thee,

And mine were nothing had I such to  
give;

But when I stood beneath the fresh  
green tree,

Which living waves where thou didst  
cease to live,

And saw around me the wide field revive  
With fruits and fertile promise, and the  
Spring

Came forth her work of gladness to  
contrive,

With all her reckless birds upon the  
wing,

I turn'd from all she brought to those  
she could not bring.

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom  
each

And one as all a ghastly gap did make  
In his own kind and kindred, whom to  
teach

Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;  
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's,  
must awake

Those whom they thirst for; though the  
sound of Fame

May for a moment soothe, it cannot  
slake

The fever of vain longing, and the name  
So honor'd but assumes a stronger,  
bitterer claim.

They mourn, but smile at length; and,  
smiling, mourn:

The tree will wither long before it fall;  
The hull drives on, though mast and  
sail be torn;

The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on  
the hall

In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall  
Stands when its wind-worn battlements  
are gone;

The bars survive the captive they en-  
thral;

The day drags through, though storms  
keep out the sun;

And thus the heart will break, yet bro-  
kenly live on:

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass  
In every fragment multiplies; and makes  
A thousand images of one that was,

The same, and still the more, the more  
it breaks;

And thus the heart will do which not  
forsakes,

Living in shatter'd guise; and still, and  
cold,

And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow  
aches,

Yet withers on till all without is old,  
Showing no visible sign, for such things  
are untold.

There is a very life in our despair,  
Vitality of poison,—a quick root  
Which feeds these deadly branches; for  
it were

As nothing did we die ; but Life will suit  
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,  
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's  
shore,  
All ashes to the taste : Did man compute  
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er  
Such hours 'gainst years of life,—say,  
would he name threescore ?

The Psalmist number'd out the years of  
man :  
They are enough ; and if thy tale be  
*true*,  
Thou, who didst grudge him even that  
fleeting span,  
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo !  
Millions of tongues record thee, and  
anew  
Their children's lips shall echo them,  
and say—  
“ Here, where the sword united nations  
drew,  
Our countrymen were warring on that  
day ! ”  
And this is much, and all which will not  
pass away.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst  
of men,  
Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,  
One moment of the mightiest, and again  
On little objects with like firmness fixt ;  
Extreme in all things ! hadst thou been  
betwixt,  
Thy throne had still been thine, or never  
been ;  
For daring made thy rise as fall : thou  
seek'st  
Even now to re-assume the imperial  
mien,  
And shake again the world, the Thun-  
derer of the scene !

Conqueror and captive of the earth art  
thou !  
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild  
name  
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds  
than now  
That thou art nothing, save the jest of  
Fame,  
Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and  
became  
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou  
wert  
A god unto thyself ; nor less the same  
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,  
Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er  
thou didst assert.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or  
low,  
Battling with nations, flying from the  
field ;  
Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-  
stool, now  
More than thy meanest soldier taught  
to yield ;  
An empire thou couldst crush, command,  
rebuild,  
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,  
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,  
Look through thine own, nor curb the  
lust of war,  
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave  
the loftiest star.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turn-  
ing tide  
With that untaught innate philosophy.  
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep  
pride,  
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.  
When the whole host of hatred stood  
hard by,  
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou  
hast smiled  
With a sedate and all-enduring eye ;—  
When Fortune fled her spoil'd and  
favorite child,  
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon  
him piled.

Sager than in thy fortunes ; for in them  
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show  
That just habitual scorn, which could  
contemn  
Men and their thoughts ; 'twas wise to  
feel, not so  
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow.  
And spurn the instruments thou wert to  
use  
Till they were turn'd unto thine over-  
throw :  
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose ;  
So hath it proved to thee, and all such  
lot who choose.

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,  
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall  
alone,  
Such scorn of man had help'd to brave  
the shock ;  
But men's thoughts were the steps which  
paved thy throne,  
Their admiration thy best weapon shone ;  
The part of Philip's son was thine, not  
then  
(Unless aside thy purple had been  
thrown)



Like stern Diogenes to mock at men ;  
For sceptred cynics earth were far too  
wide a den.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,  
And *there* hath been thy bane ; there is a  
fire

And motion of the soul which will not  
dwell

In its own narrow being, but aspire  
Beyond the fitting medium of desire ;  
And, but once kindled, quenchless ever-  
more,

Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire  
Of aught but rest ; a fever at the core,  
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever  
bore.

This makes the madmen who have made  
men mad

By their contagion ; Conquerors and  
Kings,

Founders of sects and systems, to whom  
add

Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet  
things

Which stir too strongly the soul's secret  
springs.

And are themselves the fools to those  
they fool ;

Enviied, yet how unenviable ! what stings  
Are theirs ! One breast laid open were a  
school

Which would unteach mankind the lust  
to shine or rule :

Their breath is agitation, and their life  
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at  
last,

And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,  
That should their days, surviving perils  
past,

Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast  
With sorrow and supineness, and so die ;

Even as a flame unfed, which runs to  
waste

With its own flickering, or a sword laid  
by,

Which eats into itself, and rusts inglori-  
ously.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall  
find

The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds  
and snow ;

He who surpasses or subdues mankind  
Must look down on the hate of those  
below.

Though high above the sun of glory glow,

And far beneath the earth and ocean  
spread,

Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow  
Contending tempests on his naked head,  
And thus reward the toils which to those  
summits led.

Away with these ! true Wisdom's world  
will be

Within its own creation, or in thine,  
Maternal Nature ! for who seems like  
thee,

Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine ?  
There Harold gazes on a work divine,

A blending of all beauties ; streams and  
dells,

Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield,  
mountain, vine,

And chieffless castles breathing stern  
farewells

From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin  
greenly dwells.

And there they stand, as stands a lofty  
mind,

Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,  
All tenantless, save to the crannying  
wind,

Or holding dark communion with the  
cloud.

There was a day when they were young  
and proud ;

Banners on high, and battles pass'd  
below ;

But they who fought are in a bloody  
shroud,

And those which waved are shredless  
dust ere now.

And the bleak battlements shall bear no  
future blow.

Beneath those battlements, within those  
walls,

Power dwelt amidst her passions ; in  
proud state

Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,  
Doing his evil will, nor less elate

Than mightier heroes of a longer date.  
What want these outlaws conquerors  
should have

But history's purchased page to call them  
great ?

A wider space, an ornamented grave ?  
Their hopes were not less warm, their  
souls were full as brave.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,  
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died !

And Love, which lent a blazon to their  
shields,



With emblems well devised by amorous  
pride,  
Through all the mail of iron hearts  
would glide;  
But still their flame was fierceness, and  
drew on  
Keen contest and destruction near allied,  
And many a tower for some fair mis-  
chief won,  
Saw the discolored Rhine beneath its  
ruin run.

But Thou, exulting and abounding  
river!  
Making thy waves a blessing as they  
flow  
Through banks whose beauty would  
endure for ever  
Could man but leave thy bright crea-  
tion so,  
Nor its fair promise from the surface  
mow  
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—  
then to see  
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to  
know  
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem  
such to me,  
Even now what wants thy stream?—  
that it should Lethe be.

A thousand battles have assailed thy  
banks,  
But these and half their fame have  
pass'd away,  
And Slaughter heap'd on high his welter-  
ing ranks;  
Their very graves are gone, and what  
are they?  
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of  
yesterday.  
And all was stainless, and on thy clear  
stream  
Glass'd, with its dancing light, the  
sunny ray;  
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blight-  
ing dream  
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweep-  
ing as they seem.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,  
Yet not insensible to all which here  
Awoke the jocund birds to early song  
In glens which might have made even  
exile dear:  
Though on his brow were graven lines  
austere,  
And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en  
the place

Of feelings fierier far but less severe.  
Joy was not always absent from his face.  
But o'er it in such scenes would steal  
with transient trace.

Nor was all love shut from him, though  
his days  
Of passion had consumed themselves to  
dust.  
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze  
On such as smile upon us; the heart  
must  
Leap kindly back to kindness, though  
disgust  
Hath wean'd it from all worldlings: thus  
he felt,  
For there was soft remembrance, and  
sweet trust  
In one fond breast, to which his own  
would melt,  
And in its tenderer hour on that his  
bosom dwelt.

And he had learn'd to love,—I know not  
why,  
For this in such as him seems strange of  
mood,—  
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,  
Even in its earliest nurture; what sub-  
dued,  
To change like this, a mind so far im-  
bued  
With scorn of man, it little boots to  
know;  
But thus it was: and though in solitude  
Small power the nipp'd affections have  
to grow,  
In him this glow'd when all beside had  
ceased to glow.

And there was one soft breast, as hath  
been said,  
Which unto his was bound by stronger  
ties  
Than the church links withal; and,  
though unwed,  
That love was pure, and, far above dis-  
guise,  
Had stood the test of mortal enmities  
Still undivided, and cemented more  
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;  
But this was firm, and from a foreign  
shore  
Well to that heart might his these ab-  
sent greetings pour!

The castled crag of Drachenfels  
Frowns o'er the wide and winding  
Rhine,

Whose breast of waters broadly swells  
Between the banks which bear the  
vine,  
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,  
And fields which promise corn and  
wine,  
And scatter'd cities crowning these,  
Whose far white walls along them  
shine,  
Have strew'd a scene, which I should  
see  
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

And peasant girls, with deep blue  
eyes,  
And hands which offer early flowers,  
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;  
Above, the frequent feudal towers  
Through green leaves lift their walls  
of gray;  
And many a rock which steeply  
lowers,  
And noble arch in proud decay,  
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;  
But one thing want these banks of  
Rhine,—  
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

I send the lilies given to me;  
Though long before thy hand they  
touch,  
I know that they must wither'd be,  
But yet reject them not as such;  
For I have cherish'd them as dear.  
Because they yet may meet thine eye,  
And guide thy soul to mine even here,  
When thou behold'st them drooping  
nigh,  
And know'st them gather'd by the  
Rhine,  
And offer'd from my heart to thine!

The river nobly foams and flows,  
The charm of this enchanted ground,  
And all its thousand turns disclose  
Some fresher beauty varying round:  
The haughtiest breast its wish might  
bound  
Through life to dwell delighted here;  
Nor could on earth a spot be found  
To nature and to me so dear,  
Could thy dear eyes in following mine  
Still sweeten more these banks of  
Rhine!

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground,  
There is a small and simple pyramid,  
Crowning the summit of the verdant  
mound;

Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,  
Our enemy's—but let not that forbid  
Honor to Marceau! o'er whose early  
tomb  
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough  
soldier's lid,  
Lamenting and yet envying such a  
doom,  
Falling for France, whose rights he  
battled to resume.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young  
career,—  
His mourners were two hosts, his friends  
and foes;  
And fitly may the stranger lingering  
here  
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;  
For he was Freedom's champion, one of  
those,  
The few in number, who had not  
o'erstept  
The charter to chastise which she be-  
stows  
On such as wield her weapons; he had  
kept  
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men  
o'er him wept.

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd  
wall  
Black with the miner's blast, upon her  
height  
Yet shows of what she was, when shell  
and ball  
Rebounding idly on her strength did  
light:  
A tower of victory! from whence the  
flight  
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the  
plain:  
But Peace destroy'd what War could  
never blight,  
And laid those proud roofs bare to Sum-  
mer's rain—  
On which the iron shower for years had  
pour'd in vain.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long  
delighted  
The stranger fain would linger on his  
way!  
Thine is a scene alike where souls united  
Or lonely Contemplation thus might  
stray;  
And could the ceaseless vultures cease  
to prey  
On self-condemning bosoms, it were  
here,

Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too  
gay,  
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,  
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to  
the year.

Adieu to thee again ! a vain adieu !  
There can be no farewell to scene like  
thine ;  
The mind is color'd by thy every hue ;  
And if reluctantly the eyes resign  
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely  
Rhine !  
'Tis with the thankful heart of parting  
praise ;  
More mighty spots may rise, more glar-  
ing shine,  
But none unite in one attaching maze  
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories  
of old days,

The negligently grand, the fruitful  
bloom  
Of coming ripeness, the white city's  
sheen,  
The rolling stream, the precipice's  
gloom,  
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls  
between,  
The wild rocks shaped as they had  
turrets been,  
In mockery of man's art ; and these  
withal  
A race of faces happy as the scene,  
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,  
Still springing o'er thy banks, though  
Empires near them fall.

But these recede. Above me are the  
Alps,  
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls  
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy  
scalps,  
And throned Eternity in icy halls  
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls  
The avalanche — the thunderbolt of  
snow !  
All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,  
Gather around these summits, as to  
show  
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet  
leave vain man below.

But ere these matchless heights I dare  
to scan,  
There is a spot should not be pass'd in  
vain,—  
Morat ! the proud, the patriot field !  
where man

May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,  
Nor blush for those who conquer'd on  
that plain ;  
Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tomb-  
less host,  
A bony heap, through ages to remain,  
Themselves their monument ; — the  
Stygian coast  
Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd  
each wandering ghost.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage  
vies,  
Morat and Marathon twin names shall  
stand ;  
They were true Glory's stainless vic-  
tories,  
Won by the unambitious heart and  
hand  
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,  
All unbought champions in no princely  
cause  
Of vice-entail'd Corruption ; they no  
land  
Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of  
laws  
Making kings' rights divine, by some  
Draconic clause.

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears  
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old  
days ;  
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of  
years,  
And looks as with the wild-bewilder'd  
gaze  
Of one to stone converted by amaze,  
Yet still with consciousness ; and there  
it stands  
Making a marvel that it not decays,  
When the coeval pride of human hands,  
Levell'd Adventicum,<sup>1</sup> hath strew'd her  
subject lands.

And there—oh ! sweet and sacred be  
the name !—  
Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave  
Her youth to Heaven ; her heart, be-  
neath a claim  
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's  
grave.  
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers  
would crave  
The life she lived in ; but the judge was  
just,  
And then she died on him she could  
not save.

<sup>1</sup>The Roman capital of Helvetia ; now Aven-  
ches.

Their tomb was simple, and without  
a bust,  
And held within their urn one mind,  
one heart, one dust.

But these are deeds which should not  
pass away,  
And names that must not wither,  
though the earth  
Forgets her empires with a just decay,  
The enslavers and the enslaved, their  
death and birth ;  
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth  
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,  
And from its immortality look forth  
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine  
snow.  
Imperishably pure beyond all things  
below.

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal  
face,  
The mirror where the stars and moun-  
tains view  
The stillness of their aspect in each trace  
Its clear depth yields of their far  
height and hue ;  
There is too much of man here, to look  
through  
With a fit mind the might which I  
behold ;  
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew  
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd  
than of old,  
Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd  
me in their fold.

To fly from, need not be to hate, man-  
kind :  
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,  
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind  
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil  
In the hot throng, where we become  
the spoil  
Of our infection, till too late and long  
We may deplore and struggle with the  
coil,  
In wretched interchange of wrong for  
wrong  
Midst a contentious world, striving  
where none are strong.

There, in a moment we may plunge our  
years  
In fatal penitence, and in the blight  
Of our own soul turn all our blood to  
tears,  
And color things to come with hues  
of Night ;

The race of life becomes a hopeless  
flight  
To those who walk in darkness : on the  
sea  
The boldest steer but where their ports  
invite ;  
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity  
Whose bark drives on and on, and  
anchor'd ne'er shall be.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,  
And love Earth only for its earthly sake ?  
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,  
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,  
Which feeds it as a mother who doth  
make  
A fair but froward infant her own care.  
Kissing its cries away as these awake ;—  
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,  
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd  
to inflict or bear ?

I live not in myself, but I become  
Portion of that around me ; and to me  
High mountains are a feeling, but the  
hum  
Of human cities torture : I can see  
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be  
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,  
Class'd among creatures, when the soul  
can flee,  
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving  
plain  
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not  
in vain.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life :  
I look upon the peopled desert past,  
As on a place of agony and strife,  
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was  
cast,  
To act and suffer, but remount at last  
With a fresh pinion ; which I feel to  
spring,  
Though young, yet waxing vigorous as  
the blast  
Which it would cope with, on de-  
lighted wing,  
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which  
round our being cling.

And when, at length, the mind shall be  
all free  
From what it hates in this degraded  
form,  
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be  
Existent happier in the fly and worm—  
When elements to elements conform,  
And dust is as it should be, shall I not

Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm ?

The bodiless thought ? the Spirit of each spot ?

Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot ?

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part

Of me and of my soul, as I of them ?

Is not the love of these deep in my heart With a pure passion ? should I not condemn

All objects, if compared with these ? and stem

A tide of suffering, rather than forego Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm

Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,

Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow ?

But this is not my theme ; and I return To that which is immediate, and require Those who find contemplation in the urn, To look on One, whose dust was once all fire.

A native of the land where I respire The clear air for a while—a passing guest Where he became a being,—whose desire Was to be glorious ; 't was a foolish quest.

The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,

The apostle of affliction, he who threw Enchantment over passion, and from woe Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew

The breath which made him wretched ; yet he knew

How to make madness beautiful and cast O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue

Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past

The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feeling and fast.

His love was passion's essence :—as a tree On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame Kindled he was, and blasted ; for to be Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the same.

But his was not the love of living dame, Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,

But of ideal beauty, which became In him existence, and o'erflowing teems Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

*This* breathed itself to life in Julie, *this* Invested her with all that's wild and sweet ;

This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,

From hers, who but with friendship his would meet ;

But to that gentle touch through brain and breast

Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat ;

In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest

Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possess.

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,

Or friends by him self-banish'd ; for his mind

Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,

For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind, 'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.

But he was phrensied,—wherefore, who may know ?

Since cause might be which skill could never find ;

But he was phrensied by disease or woe, To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

For then he was inspired, and from him came,

As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,

Those oracles which set the world in flame,

Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more :

Did he not this for France ? which lay before

Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years ? Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,

Till by the voice of him and his compeers Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears ?

They made themselves a fearful monument !

The wreck of old opinions—things which grew,

Breathed from the birth of time: the  
 veil they rent,  
 And what behind it lay, all earth shall  
 view.  
 But good with ill they also overthrew,  
 Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild  
 Upon the same foundation, and renew  
 Dungeons and thrones, which the same  
 hour refill'd,  
 As heretofore, because ambition was self-  
 will'd.

But this will not endure, nor be endured !  
 Mankind have felt their strength, and  
 made it felt.  
 They might have used it better, but,  
 allured  
 By their new vigor, sternly have they  
 dealt  
 On one another; pity ceased to melt  
 With her once natural charities. But  
 they,  
 Who in oppression's darkness caved had  
 dwelt,  
 They were not eagles, nourish'd with  
 the day;  
 What marvel then, at times, if they  
 mistook their prey?

What deep wounds ever closed with-  
 out a scar?  
 The heart's bleed longest, and but heal  
 to wear  
 That which disfigures it; and they who  
 war  
 With their own hopes, and have been  
 vanquish'd, bear  
 Silence, but not submission: in his  
 lair  
 Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until  
 the hour  
 Which shall atone for years; none need  
 despair:  
 It came, it cometh, and will come,—  
 the power  
 To punish or forgive—in one we shall be  
 slower.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted  
 lake,  
 With the wild world I dwelt in, is a  
 thing  
 Which warns me, with its stillness, to  
 forsake  
 Earth's troubled waters for a purer  
 spring.  
 This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing  
 To waft me from distraction; once I  
 loved

Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft mur-  
 muring  
 Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice re-  
 proved,  
 That I with stern delights should e'er  
 have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between  
 Thy margin and the mountains, dusk,  
 yet clear,  
 Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly  
 seen,  
 Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights  
 appear  
 Precipitously steep; and drawing near,  
 There breathes a living fragrance from  
 the shore,  
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on  
 the ear  
 Drops the light drip of the suspended  
 oar,  
 Or chirps the grasshopper one good-  
 night carol more;

He is an evening reveller, who makes  
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill;  
 At intervals, some bird from out the  
 brakes  
 Starts into voice a moment, then is  
 still.  
 There seems a floating whisper on the  
 hill,  
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dews  
 All silently their tears of love instil,  
 Weeping themselves away, till they  
 infuse  
 Deep into nature's breast the spirit of  
 her hues.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of  
 heaven!  
 If in your bright leaves we would read  
 the fate  
 Of men and empires.—'tis to be for-  
 given,  
 That in our aspirations to be great,  
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,  
 And claim a kindred with you; for ye  
 are  
 A beauty and a mystery, and create  
 In us such love and reverence from  
 afar,  
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have  
 named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still—though  
 not in sleep,  
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling  
 most;

And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep :—  
 All heaven and earth are still : From the high host  
 Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain coast,  
 All is concentr'd in a life intense,  
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,  
 But hath a part of being, and a sense  
 Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt  
 In solitude, where we are *least* alone ;  
 A truth, which through our being then doth melt,  
 And purifies from self : it is a tone,  
 The soul and source of music, which makes known  
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm  
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,  
 Binding all things with beauty :—  
 't would disarm  
 The spectre Death, had he substantial  
 power to harm.

Not vainly did the early Persian make  
 His altar the high places, and the peak  
 Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take  
 A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek  
 The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,  
 Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare  
 Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,  
 With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,  
 Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe  
 thy prayer !

The sky is changed !—and such a change !  
 Oh night,  
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light  
 Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along,  
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among  
 Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one lone cloud,  
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,  
 And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,  
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud !

And this is in the night :—Most glorious night !  
 Thou wert not sent for slumber ! let me be  
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
 A portion of the tempest and of thee !  
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth !  
 And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee  
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,  
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between  
 Heights which appear as lovers who have parted  
 In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,  
 That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted ;  
 Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,  
 Love was the very root of the fond rage  
 Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed :  
 Itself expired, but leaving them an age  
 Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage :

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,  
 The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand :  
 For here, not one, but many, make their play,  
 And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,  
 Flashing and cast around ; of all the band,  
 The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd  
 His lightnings,—as if he did understand,  
 That in such gaps as desolation work'd,  
 There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings ! ye !  
 With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul  
 To make these felt and feeling, well may be  
 Things that have made me watchful ; the far roll

Of your departing voices, is the knoll  
 Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.  
 But where of ye, O tempests! is the  
 goal?  
 Are ye like those within the human  
 breast?  
 Or do ye find, at length, like eagles,  
 some high nest?

Could I embody and unbosom now  
 That which is most within me,—could  
 I wreak  
 My thoughts upon expression, and thus  
 throw  
 Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings,  
 strong or weak,  
 All that I would have sought, and all I  
 seek,  
 Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—  
 into *one* word,  
 And that one word were Lightning, I  
 would speak;  
 But as it is, I live and die unheard,  
 With a most voiceless thought, sheath-  
 ing it as a sword.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,  
 With breath all incense, and with  
 cheek all bloom,  
 Laughing the clouds away with playful  
 scorn,  
 And living as if earth contain'd no  
 tomb,—  
 And glowing into day: we may resume  
 The march of our existence: and thus I,  
 Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may  
 find room  
 And food for meditation, nor pass by  
 Much, that may give us pause, if pon-  
 der'd fittingly.

Clarens! sweet Clarens, birthplace of  
 deep Love!  
 Thine air is the young breath of pas-  
 sionate thought;  
 Thy trees take root in Love; the snows  
 above  
 The very Glaciers have his colors  
 caught,  
 And sunset into rose-hues sees them  
 wrought  
 By rays which sleep there lovingly; the  
 rocks,  
 The permanent crags, tell here of Love,  
 who sought  
 In them a refuge from the worldly  
 shocks,  
 Which stir and sting the soul with hope  
 that woos, then mocks.

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are  
 trod,—  
 Undying Love's, who here ascends a  
 throne  
 To which the steps are mountains;  
 where the god  
 Is a pervading life and light,—so shown  
 Not on those summits solely, nor alone  
 In the still cave and forest; o'er the  
 flower  
 His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath  
 blown,  
 His soft and summer breath, whose  
 tender power  
 Passes the strength of storms in their  
 most desolate hour.

All things are here of *him*; from the  
 black pines,  
 Which are his shade on high, and the  
 loud roar  
 Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the  
 vines  
 Which slope his green path downward  
 to the shore,  
 Where the bow'd waters meet him, and  
 adore,  
 Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the  
 wood,  
 The covert of old trees, with trunks all  
 hoar,  
 But light leaves, young as joy, stands  
 where it stood,  
 Offering to him, and his, a populous  
 solitude;

A populous solitude of bees and birds,  
 And fairy-form'd and many color'd  
 things,  
 Who worship him with notes more sweet  
 than words,  
 And innocently open their glad wings,  
 Fearless and full of life: the gush of  
 springs,  
 And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend  
 Of stirring branches, and the bud which  
 brings  
 The swiftest thought of beauty, here  
 extend,  
 Mingling, and made by Love, unto one  
 mighty end.

He who hath loved not, here would learn  
 that lore,  
 And make his heart a spirit; he who  
 knows  
 That tender mystery, will love the more;  
 For this is Love's recess, where vain men's  
 woes,



And the world's waste, have driven him  
far from those,  
For 't is his nature to advance or die ;  
He stands not still, but or decays, or  
grows  
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie  
With the immortal lights, in its eternity !

'T was not for fiction chose Rousseau  
this spot,  
Peopling it with affections ; but he found  
It was the scene which Passion must allot  
To the mind's purified beings ; 't was the  
ground  
Where early Love his Payche's zone  
unbound,  
And hallow'd it with loveliness ; 't is lone,  
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a  
sound,  
And sense, and sight of sweetness ; here  
the Rhone  
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps  
have rear'd a throne.

Lausanne ! and Ferney ! ye have been  
the abodes  
Of names which unto you bequeath'd  
a name ;  
Mortals, who sought and found, by  
dangerous roads,  
A path to perpetuity of fame :  
They were gigantic minds, and their  
steep aim  
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile  
Thoughts which should call down  
thunder, and the flame  
Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the  
while  
On man and man's research could deign  
do more than smile.

The one<sup>1</sup> was fire and fickleness, a child  
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind  
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or  
wild,—  
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined ;  
He multiplied himself among mankind,  
The Proteus of their talents : But his own  
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as  
the wind,  
Blew where it listed, laying all things  
prone,—  
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to  
shake a throne.

The other,<sup>2</sup> deep and slow, exhausting  
thought,

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire.<sup>2</sup> Gibbon

And hiving wisdom with each studious  
year,  
In meditation dwelt, with learning  
wrought,  
And shaped his weapon with an edge  
severe,  
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn  
sneer ;  
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,  
Which stung his foes to wrath, which  
grew from fear,  
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready  
Hell,  
Which answers to all doubts so elo-  
quently well.

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by  
them,  
If merited, the penalty is paid ;  
It is not ours to judge,—far less con-  
demn ;  
The hour must come when such things  
shall be made  
Known unto all, or hope and dread  
allay'd  
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,  
Which, thus much we are sure, must  
lie decay'd ;  
And when it shall revive, as is our  
trust,  
'T will be to be forgiven, or suffer what  
is just.

But let me quit man's works, again to  
read  
His Maker's, spread around me, and  
suspend  
This page, which from my reveries I feed,  
Until it seems prolonging without end.  
The clouds above me to the white Alps  
tend,  
And I must pierce them, and survey  
whate'er  
May be permitted, as my steps I bend  
To their most great and growing region,  
where  
The earth to her embrace compels the  
powers of air.

Italia ! too, Italia ! looking on thee.  
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages—  
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost  
won thee,  
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages  
Who glorify thy consecrated pages ;  
Thou wert the throne and grave of  
empires ; still,  
The fount at which the panting mind  
assuages

Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there  
her fill,  
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's  
imperial hill.

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme  
Renew'd with no kind auspices: to feel  
We are not what we have been, and to  
deem

We are not what we should be, and to  
steel

The heart against itself; and to conceal,  
What a proud caution, love, or hate, or  
aught,—

Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or  
zeal,—

Which is the tyrant spirit of our  
thought,

Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it  
is taught.

And for these words, thus woven into  
song,

It may be that they are a harmless  
wile,—

The coloring of the scenes which fleet  
along,

Which I would seize, in passing, to be-  
guile

My breast, or that of others, for a while.  
Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am  
not

So young as to regard men's frown or  
smile,

As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot:  
I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or  
forgot.

I have not loved the world, nor the world  
me:

I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor  
bow'd

To its idolatries a patient knee,  
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried  
aloud

In worship of an echo: in the crowd  
They could not deem me one of such; I  
stood

Among them, but not of them; in a  
shroud

Of thoughts which were not their  
thoughts, and still could,

Had I not filed my mind, which thus  
itself subdued,

I have not loved the world, nor the world  
me,—

But let us part fair foes; I do believe,  
Though I have found them not, that  
there may be

Words which are things, hopes which  
will not deceive,

And virtues which are merciful, nor  
weave

Snares for the failing; I would also  
deem

O'er others' griefs that some sincerely  
grieve;

That two, or one, are almost what they  
seem,

That goodness is no name, and hap-  
piness no dream

My daughter! with thy name this song  
begun;

My daughter! with thy name thus much  
shall end;

I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none  
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the  
friend

To whom the shadows of far years ex-  
tend;

Albeit my brow thou never shouldst  
behold,

My voice shall with thy future visions  
blend,

And reach into thy heart, when mine is  
cold,

A token and a tone, even from thy  
father's mould.

To aid thy mind's development, to watch  
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see

Almost thy very growth, to view thee  
catch

Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to  
thee!

To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,  
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's  
kiss,—

This, it should seem, was not reserved  
for me;

Yet this was in my nature: as it is,  
I know not what is there, yet something  
like to this.

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should  
be taught,

I know that thou wilt love me; though  
my name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still  
fraught

With desolation, and a broken claim;  
Though the grave closed between us,—  
't were the same,

I know that thou wilt love me; though  
to drain

My blood from out thy being were an  
aim,

And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—  
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more than life retain.

The child of love, though born in bitterness,  
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire  
These were the elements, and thine no less.

As yet such are around thee, but thy fire  
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope far higher.

Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea

And from the mountains where I now respire,

Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,

As with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me.

*May-June, 1816. November 18, 1816.*

#### SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!  
Brightest in dungeons. Liberty! thou art,  
For there thy habitation is the heart—  
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;

And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,

Their country conquers with their martyrdom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,

And thy sad floor an altar—for 't was trod,

Until his very steps have left a trace

Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,

By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!

For they appeal from tyranny to God.

*June, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

#### THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

MY hair is gray, but not with years,  
Nor grew it white

In a single night,

As men's have grown from sudden fears:

My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil.

But rusted with a vile repose,

For they have been a dungeon's spoil,

And mine has been the fate of those

To whom the goodly earth and air  
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare;  
But this was for my father's faith  
I suffer'd chains and courted death;  
That father perish'd at the stake  
For tenets he would not forsake;  
And for the same his lineal race  
In darkness found a dwelling-place;  
We were seven—who now are one,  
Six in youth, and one in age,  
Finish'd as they had begun,

Proud of Persecution's rage;

One in fire, and two in field

Their belief with blood have seal'd,

Dying as their father died,

For the God their foes denied;

Three were in a dungeon cast,

Of whom this wreck is left the last.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,  
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,  
There are seven columns, massy and gray,

Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,

A sunbeam which hath lost its way

And through the crevice and the cleft

Of the thick wall is fallen and left;

Creeping o'er the floor so damp,

Like a marsh's meteor lamp:

And in each pillar there is a ring,

And in each ring there is a chain;

That iron is a cankering thing,

For in these limbs its teeth remain,

With marks that will not wear away,

Till I have done with this new day,

Which now is painful to these eyes,

Which have not seen the sun so rise

For years—I cannot count them o'er,

I lost their long and heavy score,

When my last brother droop'd and died,

And I lay living by his side.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,

And we were three—yet, each alone,

We could not move a single pace,

We could not see each other's face,

But with that pale and livid light

That made us strangers in our sight:

And thus together—yet apart.

Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart.

'T was still some solace, in the dearth

Of the pure elements of earth,

To hearken to each other's speech,

And each turn comforter to each

With some new hope, or legend old,

Or song heroically bold;

But even these at length grew cold.

Our voices took a dreary tone,

An echo of the dungeon stone,

ting sound, not full and free,  
 ey of yore were wont to be;  
 ght be fancy, but to me  
 ever sounded like our own.

he eldest of the three,  
 to uphold and cheer the rest  
 ht to do—and did my best—  
 ch did well in his degree.  
 oungest, whom my father loved,  
 e our mother's brow was given  
 , with eyes as blue as heaven—  
 im my soul was sorely moved;  
 ily might it be distress'd  
 uch bird in such a nest;  
 was beautiful as day—  
 en day was beautiful to me  
 young eagles, being free)—  
 ar day, which will not see  
 et till its summer's gone,  
 eepless summer of long light,  
 ow-clad offspring of the sun:  
 thus he was as pure and bright,  
 his natural spirit gay,  
 ears for nought but others' ills,  
 en they flow'd like mountain rills,  
 he could assuage the woe  
 he abhor'd to view below.

er was as pure of mind,  
 m'd to combat with his kind;  
 in his frame, and of a mood  
 'gainst the world in war had  
 food,  
 rish'd in the foremost rank  
 joy:—but not in chains to pine:  
 it wither'd with their clank,  
 it silently decline—  
 so perchance in sooth did mine:  
 I forced it on to cheer  
 elics of a home so dear.  
 a hunter of the hills,  
 follow'd there the deer and wolf;  
 m his dungeon was a gulf,  
 tter'd feet the worst of ills.

Leman lies by Chillon's walls:  
 sand feet in depth below  
 ay waters meet and flow;  
 uch the fathom-line was sent  
 Chillon's snow-white battlement,  
 h round about the wave intrals:  
 le dungeon wall and wave  
 ade—and like a living grave  
 the surface of the lake  
 rk vault lies wherein we lay,  
 and it ripple night and day;  
 ding o'er our heads it knock'd;  
 have felt the winter's spray

Wash though the bars when winds were  
 high

And wanton in the happy sky;  
 And then the very rock hath rock'd,  
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd  
 Because I could have smiled to see  
 The death that would have set me free.

I said my nearer brother pined,  
 I said his mighty heart declined,  
 He loathed and put away his food;  
 It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,  
 For we were used to hunter's fare,  
 And for the like had little care:  
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat  
 Was changed for water from the moat,  
 Our bread was such as captives' tears  
 Have moisten'd many a thousand years,  
 Since man first pent his fellow men  
 Like brutes within an iron den;  
 But what were these to us or him?  
 These wasted not his heart or limb;  
 My brother's soul was of that mould  
 Which in a palace had grown cold.  
 Had his free breathing been denied  
 The range of the steep mountain's side;  
 But why delay the truth?—he died.  
 I saw, and could not hold his head,  
 Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead.—  
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain  
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.  
 He died, and they unlock'd his chain,  
 And scoop'd for him a shallow grave  
 Even from the cold earth of our cave,  
 I begg'd them as a boon to lay  
 His corse in dust whereon the day  
 Might shine—it was a foolish thought,  
 But then within my brain it wrought,  
 That even in death his freeborn breast  
 In such a dungeon could not rest.  
 I might have spared my idle prayer—  
 They coldly laugh'd, and laid him there:  
 The flat and turfless earth above  
 The being we so much did love;  
 His empty chain above it leant,  
 Such murder's fitting monument!

But he, the favorite and the flower,  
 Most cherish'd since his natal hour,  
 His mother's image in fair face,  
 The infant love of all his race,  
 His martyr'd father's dearest thought  
 My latest care, for whom I sought  
 To hoard my life, that his might be  
 Less wretched now, and one day free;  
 He, too, who yet had held untired  
 A spirit natural or inspired—  
 He, too, was struck, and day by day  
 Was wither'd on the stalk away.



Oh, God ! it is a fearful thing  
 To see the human soul take wing  
 In any shape, in any mood :  
 I've seen it rushing forth in blood,  
 I've seen it on the breaking ocean  
 Strive with a swollen convulsive motion,  
 I've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
 Of Sin delirious with its dread :  
 But these were horrors—this was woe  
 Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow :  
 He faded, and so calm and meek,  
 So softly worn, so sweetly weak,  
 So tearless, yet so tender, kind,  
 And grieved for those he left behind ;  
 With all the while a cheek whose bloom  
 Was as a mockery of the tomb,  
 Whose tints as gently sunk away  
 As a departing rainbow's ray ;  
 An eye of most transparent light,  
 That almost made the dungeon bright,  
 And not a word of murmur, not  
 A groan o'er his untimely lot,—  
 A little talk of better days,  
 A little hope my own to raise,  
 For I was sunk in silence—lost  
 In this last loss, of all the most ;  
 And then the sighs he would suppress  
 Of fainting nature's feebleness,  
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less :  
 I listen'd, but I could not hear ;  
 I call'd, for I was wild with fear :  
 I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread  
 Would not be thus admonished ;  
 I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—  
 I burst my chain with one strong bound.  
 And rush'd to him :—I found him not,  
 I only stirr'd in this black spot,  
 I only lived, I only drew  
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;  
 The last, the sole, the dearest link  
 Between me and the eternal brink,  
 Which bound me to my failing race,  
 Was broken in this fatal place.  
 One on the earth, and one beneath—  
 My brothers—both had ceased to breathe :  
 I took that hand which lay so still,  
 Alas ! my own was full as chill ;  
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,  
 But felt that I was still alive—  
 A frantic feeling, when we know  
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.  
     I know not why  
     I could not die,  
 I had no earthly hope but faith,  
 And that forbade a selfish death.

What next befell me then and there  
 I know not well—I never knew—  
 First came the loss of light, and air,

And then of darkness too :  
 I had no thought, no feeling—none—  
 Among the stones I stood a stone,  
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist.  
 As shrubless crags within the mist ;  
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray ;  
 It was not night, it was not day ;  
 It was not even the dungeon-light,  
 So hateful to my heavy sight,  
 But vacancy absorbing space,  
 And fixedness without a place ;  
 There were no stars, no earth, no time  
 No check, no change, no good, no crime.  
 But silence, and a stirless breath  
 Which neither was of life nor death ;  
 A sea of stagnant idleness,  
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless !

A light broke in upon my brain,—  
 It was the carol of a bird ;  
 It ceased, and then it came again,  
 The sweetest song ear ever heard,  
 And mine was thankful till my eyes  
 Ran over with the glad surprise,  
 And they that moment could not see  
 I was the mate of misery ;  
 But then by dull degrees came back  
 My senses to their wonted track ;  
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor  
 Close slowly round me as before,  
 I saw the glimmer of the sun  
 Creeping as it before had done,  
 But through the crevice where it came  
 That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame.  
 And tamer than upon the tree ;  
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,  
 And song that said a thousand things,  
 And seem'd to say them all for me !  
 I never saw its like before,  
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more :  
 It seem'd like me to want a mate,  
 But was not half so desolate,  
 And it was come to love me when  
 None lived to love me so again,  
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,  
 Had brought me back to feel and think.  
 I know not if it late were free,  
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine,  
 But knowing well captivity,  
 Sweet bird ! I could not wish for thine !  
 Or if it were, in winged guise,  
 A visitant from Paradise ;  
 For—Heaven forgive that thought ! the  
     while  
 Which made me both to weep and  
     smile—  
 I sometimes deem'd that it might be  
 My brother's soul come down to me ;  
 But then at last away it flew,

And then 'twas mortal well I knew,  
 For he would never thus have flown,  
 And left me twice so doubly lone,  
 Lone as the corse within its shroud,  
 Lone as a solitary cloud,—  
 A single cloud on a sunny day,  
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,  
 A frown upon the atmosphere,  
 That hath no business to appear  
 When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

A kind of change came in my fate,  
 My keepers grew compassionate;  
 I know not what had made them so,  
 They were inured to sights of woe,  
 But so it was:—my broken chain  
 With links unfasten'd did remain,  
 And it was liberty to stride  
 Along my cell from side to side,  
 And up and down, and then athwart,  
 And tread it over every part;  
 And round the pillars one by one,  
 Returning where my walk begun,  
 Avoiding only, as I trod,  
 My brothers' graves without a sod;  
 For if I thought with heedless tread  
 My step profaned their lowly bed,  
 My breath came gaspingly and thick,  
 And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

I made a footing in the wall,  
 It was not therefrom to escape,  
 For I had buried one and all  
 Who loved me in a human shape;  
 And the whole earth would henceforth  
 be  
 A wider prison unto me:  
 No child, no sire, no kin had I,  
 No partner in my misery;  
 I thought of this, and I was glad,  
 For thought of them had made me mad;  
 But I was curious to ascend  
 To my barr'd windows, and to bend  
 Once more, upon the mountains high,  
 The quiet of a loving eye.

I saw them, and they were the same,  
 They were not changed like me in frame;  
 I saw their thousand years of snow  
 On high—their wide long lake below,  
 And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;  
 I heard the torrents leap and gush  
 O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;  
 I saw the white-wall'd distant town,  
 And whiter sails go skimming down;  
 And then there was a little isle,  
 Which in my very face did smile,  
 The only one in view;

A small green isle, it seem'd no more,  
 Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,  
 But in it there were three tall trees,  
 And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,  
 And by it there were waters flowing,  
 And on it there were young flowers  
 growing.

Of gentle breath and hue.  
 The fish swam by the castle wall,  
 And they seem'd joyous each and all;  
 The eagle rode the rising blast,  
 Methought he never flew so fast  
 As then to me he seem'd to fly;  
 And then new tears came in my eye,  
 And I felt troubled—and would fain  
 I had not left my recent chain;  
 And when I did descend again,  
 The darkness of my dim abode  
 Fell on me as a heavy load;  
 It was as is a new-dug grave,  
 Closing o'er one we sought to save,—  
 And yet my glance, too much oppress'd,  
 Had almost need of such a rest.

It might be months, or years, or days,  
 I kept no count, I took no note,  
 I had no hope my eyes to raise,  
 And clear them of their dreary mote;  
 At last men came to set me free;  
 I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where;  
 It was at length the same to me,  
 Fetter'd or fetterless to be,  
 I learn'd to love despair.  
 And thus when they appear'd at last,  
 And all my bonds aside were cast,  
 These heavy walls to me had grown  
 A hermitage—and all my own!  
 And half I felt as they were come  
 To tear me from a second home:  
 With spiders I had friendship made,  
 And watch'd them in their sullen trade,  
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,  
 And why should I feel less than they?  
 We were all inmates of one place,  
 And I, the monarch of each race,  
 Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!  
 In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;  
 My very chains and I grew friends,  
 So much a long communion tends  
 To make us what we are:—even I  
 Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

June 27-29-July 10, 1816. December 5, 1816.

#### STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,  
 And the star of my fate hath declined,  
 Thy soft heart refused to discover  
 The faults which so many could find.

Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,  
 It shrunk not to share it with me,  
 And the love which my spirit hath painted  
 It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,  
 The last smile which answers to mine,  
 I do not believe it beguiling,  
 Because it reminds me of thine ;  
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,  
 As the breasts I believed in with me,  
 If their billows excite an emotion,  
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,  
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
 Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd  
 To pain—it shall not be its slave.  
 There is many a pang to pursue me :  
 They may crush, but they shall not contemn ;  
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me ;  
 'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,  
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,  
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,  
 Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake ;  
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,  
 Though parted, it was not to fly.  
 Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,  
 Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it.  
 Nor the war of the many with one ;  
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,  
 'Twas folly not sooner to shun :  
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,  
 And more than I once could foresee,  
 I have found that, whatever it lost me,  
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,  
 Thus much I at least may recall.  
 It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd  
 Deserved to be dearest of all :

In the desert a fountain is springing,  
 In the wide waste there still is a tree,  
 And a bird in the solitude singing,  
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.  
*July 24, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

#### EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA

My sister ! my sweet sister ! if a name  
 Dearer and purer were, it should be  
 thine ;  
 Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim  
 No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:  
 Go where I will, to me thou art the  
 same—  
 A loved regret which I would not resign.  
 There yet are two things in my destiny,—  
 A world to roam through, and a home  
 with thee.

The first were nothing—had I still the  
 last,  
 It were the haven of my happiness ;  
 But other claims and other ties thou hast,  
 And mine is not the wish to make them  
 less.  
 A strange doom is thy father's son's, and  
 past  
 Recalling, as it lies beyond redress ;  
 Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of  
 yore,—  
 He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been  
 In other elements, and on the rocks  
 Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,  
 I have sustain'd my share of worldly  
 shocks,  
 The fault was mine ; nor do I seek to  
 screen  
 My errors with defensive paradox ;  
 I have been cunning in mine overthrow,  
 The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their  
 reward.  
 My whole life was a contest, since the  
 day  
 That gave me being, gave me that which  
 marr'd  
 The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd  
 astray ;  
 And I at times have found the struggle  
 hard,  
 And thought of shaking off my bonds of  
 clay :  
 But now I fain would for a time survive,  
 If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day  
I have outlived, and yet I am not old ;  
And when I look on this, the petty spray  
Of my own years of trouble, which have  
roll'd

Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away :  
Something—I know not what—does still  
uphold

A spirit of slight patience ;—not in vain,  
Even for its own sake, do we purchase  
pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir  
Within me—or perhaps a cold despair,  
Brought on when ills habitually recur,—  
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,  
(For even to this may change of soul  
refer,

And with light armor we may learn to  
bear,)

Have taught me a strange quiet, which  
was not

The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt  
In happy childhood ; trees, and flowers,  
and brooks,

Which do remember me of where I dwelt  
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to  
books,

Come as of yore upon me, and can melt  
My heart with recognition of their looks ;  
And even at moments I could think I  
see

Some living thing to love—but none like  
thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which  
create

A fund for contemplation ;—to admire  
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date ;  
But something worthier do such scenes  
inspire ;

Here to be lonely is not desolate,  
For much I view which I could most de-  
sire,

And, above all, a lake I can behold  
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh that thou wert but with me !—but I  
grow

The fool of my own wishes, and forget  
The solitude which I have vaunted so  
Has lost its praise in this but one regret ;  
There may be others which I less may  
show !—

I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet  
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,  
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake  
By the old Hall which may be mine no  
more.

Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake  
The sweet remembrance of a dearer  
shore :

Sad havoc Time must with my memory  
make,

Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes  
before ;

Though, like all things which I have  
loved, they are

Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

The world is all before me ; I but ask  
Of Nature that with which she will  
comply—

It is but in her summer's sun to bask,  
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,  
To see her gentle face without a mask,  
And never gaze on it with apathy.

She was my early friend, and now shall  
be

My sister—till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one ;  
And that I would not ;—for at length  
I see

Such scenes as those wherein my life  
began.

The earliest—even the only paths for  
me—

Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to  
shun,

I had been better than I now can be ;  
The passions which have torn me would  
have slept ;

I had not suffer'd and *thou* hadst not  
wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do ?  
Little with Love, and least of all with  
Fame ;

And yet they came unsought, and with  
me grew,

And made me all which they can make  
—a name.

Yet this was not the end I did pursue ;  
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.

But all is over—I am one the more  
To baffled millions which have gone  
before.

And for the future, this world's future  
may

From me demand but little of my care ;  
I have outlived myself by many a day ;  
Having survived so many things that  
were :



My years have been no slumber, but the  
prey  
Of ceaseless vigils ; for I had the share  
Of life which might have fill'd a century,  
Before its fourth in time had pass'd  
me by.

And for the remnant which may be to  
come  
I am content ; and for the past I feel  
Not thankless,—for within the crowded  
sum  
Of struggles, happiness at times would  
steal,  
And for the present, I would not benumb  
My feelings further.—Nor shall I conceal  
That with all this I still can look around,  
And worship Nature with a thought  
profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy  
heart  
I know myself secure, as thou in mine ;  
We were and are—I am, even as thou  
art—  
Beings who ne'er each other can resign :  
It is the same, together or apart.  
From life's commencement to its slow  
decline  
We are entwined—let death come slow  
or fast,  
The tie which bound the first endures  
the last ! *July, 1816. 1830.*

#### STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THEY say that Hope is happiness ;  
But genuine Love must prize the past.  
And Memory wakes the thoughts that  
bless :  
They rose the first—they set the last ;

And all that Memory loves the most  
Was once our only Hope to be,  
And all that Hope adored and lost  
Hath melted into Memory.

Alas ! it is delusion all ;  
The future cheats us from afar,  
Nor can we be what we recall,  
Nor dare we think on what we are.  
*9. . . 1829.*

#### DARKNESS

I HAD a dream, which was not all a  
dream.  
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and  
the stars

Did wander darkling in the eternal  
space,  
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth  
Swung blind and blackening in the  
moonless air ;  
Morn came and went—and came, and  
brought no day,  
And men forgot their passions in the  
dread  
Of this their desolation : and all hearts  
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for  
light ;  
And they did 'live by watchfires—and  
the thrones,  
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,  
The habitations of all things which  
dwell,  
Were burnt for beacons ; cities were  
consumed,  
And men were gather'd round their  
blazing homes  
To look once more into each other's  
face ;  
Happy were those who dwelt within the  
eye  
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-  
torch ;  
A fearful hope was all the world con-  
tain'd ;  
Forests were set on fire—but hour by  
hour  
They fell and faded—and the crackling  
trunks  
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was  
black.  
The brows of men by the despairing light  
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits  
The flashes fell upon them ; some lay  
down  
And hid their eyes and wept ; and some  
did rest  
Their chins upon their clenched hands,  
and smiled ;  
And others hurried to and fro, and fed  
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd  
up  
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,  
The pall of a past world ; and then again  
With curses cast them down upon the  
dust,  
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd : the  
wild birds shriek'd  
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,  
And flap their useless wings ; the wild-  
est brutes  
Came tame and tremulous ; and vipers  
crawl'd  
And twined themselves among the mul-  
titude,

Hissing, but stingless—they were slain  
for food !  
And War, which for a moment was no  
more,  
Did glut himself again :—a meal was  
bought  
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart  
Gorging himself in gloom : no love was  
left ;  
All earth was but one thought—and that  
was death  
Immediate and inglorious ; and the pang  
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men  
Died, and their bones were tombless as  
their flesh ;  
The meagre by the meagre were de-  
vour'd,  
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save  
one,  
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept  
The birds and beasts and famish'd men  
at bay,  
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping  
dead  
Lured their lank jaws ; himself sought  
out no food,  
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,  
And a quick desolate cry, licking the  
hand  
Which answer'd not with a caress—he  
died.  
The crowd was famish'd by degrees ; but  
two  
Of an enormous city did survive,  
And they were enemies : they met beside  
The dying embers of an altar-place  
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy  
things  
For an unholy usage ; they raked up,  
And shivering scraped with their cold  
skeleton hands  
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath  
Blew for a little life, and made a flame  
Which was a mockery ; then they lifted  
up  
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld  
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd,  
and died—  
Even of their mutual hideousness they  
died,  
Unknowing who he was upon whose  
brow  
Famine had written Fiend. The world  
was void,  
The populous and the powerful was a  
lump,  
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless,  
lifeless,

A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.  
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood  
still,  
And nothing stirr'd within their silent  
depths ;  
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,  
And their masts fell down piecemeal :  
as they dropp'd  
They slept on the abyss without a  
surge—  
The waves were dead ; the tides were in  
their grave,  
The moon, their mistress, had expired  
before ;  
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant  
air,  
And the clouds perish'd ; Darkness had  
no need  
Of aid from them—She was the Uni-  
verse.

*July, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

#### PROMETHEUS

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes  
The sufferings of mortality,  
Seen in their sad reality,  
Were not as things that gods despise ;  
What was thy pity's recompense ?  
A silent suffering, and intense ;  
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,  
All that the proud can feel of pain,  
The agony they do not show,  
The suffocating sense of woe,  
Which speaks but in its loneliness,  
And then is jealous lest the sky  
Should have a listener, nor will sigh  
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan ! to thee the strife was given  
Between the suffering and the will,  
Which torture where they cannot  
kill ;  
And the inexorable Heaven,  
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,  
The ruling principle of Hate,  
Which for its pleasure doth create  
The things it may annihilate,  
Refused thee even the boon to die ;  
The wretched gift eternity  
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.  
All that the Thunderer wrung from  
thee  
Was but the menace which flung back  
On him the torments of thy rack ;  
The fate thou didst so well foresee,  
But would not to appease him tell ;  
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,  
And in his Soul a vain repentance,

And evil dread so ill dissembled,  
That in his hand the lightnings  
trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,  
To render with thy precepts less  
The sum of human wretchedness,  
And strengthen Man with his own mind ;  
But baffled as thou wert from high,  
Still in thy patient energy,  
In the endurance, and repulse  
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,  
Which Earth and Heaven could not  
convulse,

A mighty lesson we inherit:  
Thou art a symbol and a sign  
To Mortals of their fate and force ;  
Like thee, Man is in part divine,  
A troubled stream from a pure source ;  
And Man in portions can foresee  
His own funereal destiny ;  
His wretchedness, and his resistance,  
And his sad unallied existence :  
To which his Spirit may oppose  
Itself—and equal to all woes,  
And a firm will, and a deep sense,  
Which even in torture can descry  
Its own concentr'd recompense,  
Triumphant where it dare defy,  
And making Death a Victory.

July, 1816. December, 1816.

#### SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and  
De Staël—  
Leman ! these names are worthy of thy  
shore,  
Thy shore of names like these ! wert  
thou no more  
Their memory thy remembrance would  
recall :  
To them thy banks were lovely as to  
all,  
But they have made them lovelier, for  
the lore  
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the  
core  
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall  
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous :  
but by thee  
How much more, Lake of Beauty ! do  
we feel,  
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,  
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,  
Which of the heirs of immortality  
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory  
real !

July, 1816. December 3, 1816.

## MANFRED

### A DRAMATIC POEM

"There are more things in heaven and earth,  
Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MANFRED  
CHAMOIS HUNTER  
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE  
MANUEL  
HERMAN  
WITCH OF THE ALPS  
ARIMANES  
NEMESIS  
THE DESTINIES  
SPIRITS, &c.

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the  
Higher Alps—partly in the Castle of  
Manfred, and partly in the Moun-  
tains.*

### ACT I

SCENE I.—MANFRED alone.—*Scene, a  
Gothic Gallery.—Time, Midnight.*

Man. The lamp must be replenish'd, but  
even then

It will not burn so long as I must watch :  
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,  
But a continuance of enduring thought,  
Which then I can resist not : in my heart  
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close  
To look within ; and yet I live, and bear  
The aspect and the form of breathing men.  
But grief should be the instructor of the  
wise :

Sorrow is knowledge : they who know the  
most

Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal  
truth,

The Tree of Knowledge is not that of  
Life.

Philosophy and science, and the springs  
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,  
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is  
A power to make these subject to itself—  
But they avail not : I have done men good,  
And I have met with good even among  
men—

But this avail'd not : I have had my foes,  
And none have baffled, many fallen be-  
fore me—

But this avail'd not :—Good, or evil, life,  
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,  
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,  
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no  
dread,

And feel the curse to have no natural fear,  
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with  
hopes or wishes,  
Or lurking love of something on the earth.  
Now to my task.—

Mysterious agency !  
Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe !  
Whom I have sought in darkness and in  
light—

Ye, who do compass earth about, and  
dwell

In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops  
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,  
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar  
things—

I call upon ye by the written charm  
Which gives me power upon you—Rise !  
Appear ! [A pause.

They come not yet.—Now by the voice  
of him

Who is the first among you—by this sign,  
Which makes you tremble—by the claims  
of him

Who is undying,—Rise ! Appear !—  
Appear ! [A pause.

If it be so—Spirits of earth and air,  
Ye shall not thus elude me : by a power,  
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,  
Which had its birthplace in a star con-  
demn'd,

The burning wreck of a demolish'd  
world,

A wandering hell in the eternal space ;  
By the strong curse which is upon my  
soul,

The thought which is within me and  
around me,

I do compel ye to my will—Appear !  
[A star is seen at the darker end  
of the gallery : it is stationary ; and a  
voice is heard singing.

#### FIRST SPIRIT

Mortal ! to thy bidding bow'd,  
From my mansion in the cloud,  
Which the breath of twilight builds,  
And the summer's sunset gilds  
With the azure and vermilion,  
Which is mix'd for my pavilion ;  
Though thy quest may be forbidden,  
On a star-beam I have ridden :  
To thine adjuration bow'd,  
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd !

#### SECOND SPIRIT

Mont Blanc is the monarch of moun-  
tains ;

They crown'd him long ago  
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
With a diadem of snow.

Around his waist are forests braced,  
The Avalanche in his hand ;  
But ere it fall, that thundering ball  
Must pause for my command.

The Glacier's cold and restless mass  
Moves onward day by day ;

But I am he who bids it pass,  
Or with its ice delay.

I am the spirit of the place,  
Could make the mountain bow  
And quiver to his cavern'd base—

And what with me wouldst Thou ?

#### THIRD SPIRIT

In the blue depth of the waters,  
Where the wave hath no strife,

Where the wind is a stranger,  
And the sea-snake hath life,

Where the Mermaid is decking  
Her green hair with shells,

Like the storm on the surface  
Came the sound of thy spells ;

O'er my calm Hall of Coral  
The deep echo roll'd—

To the Spirit of Ocean  
Thy wishes unfold !

#### FOURTH SPIRIT

Where the slumbering earthquake  
Lies pillow'd on fire,

And the lakes of bitumen  
Rise boilingly higher ;

Where the roots of the Andes  
Strike deep in the earth,

As their summits to heaven  
Shoot soaringly forth ;

I have quitted my birthplace,  
Thy bidding to bide—

Thy spell hath subdued me,  
Thy will be my guide !

#### FIFTH SPIRIT

I am the Rider of the wind,  
The stirrer of the storm ;

The hurricane I left behind  
Is yet with lightning warm ;

To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea  
I swept upon the blast :

The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet  
'Twill sink ere night be past.

## SIXTH SPIRIT

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,  
Why doth thy magic torture me with  
light?

## SEVENTH SPIRIT

The star which rules thy destiny  
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :  
It was a world as fresh and fair  
As e'er revolved round sun in air ;  
Its course was free and regular,  
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.  
The hour arrived—and it became  
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,  
A pathless comet, and a curse,  
The menace of the universe ;  
Still rolling on with innate force,  
Without a sphere, without a course,  
A bright deformity on high,  
The monster of the upper sky !  
And thou ! beneath its influence born—  
Thou worm ! whom I obey and scorn—  
Forced by a power (which is not thine,  
And lent thee but to make thee mine)  
For this brief moment to descend,  
Where these weak spirits round thee bend  
And parley with a thing like thee—  
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay ! with  
me ?

## The SEVEN SPIRITS

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains,  
winds, thy star,  
Are at thy beck and bidding. Child of  
Clay !  
Before thee at thy quest their spirits  
are—  
What wouldst thou with us, son of  
mortals—say ?

*Man.* Forgetfulness—

*First Spirit.* Of what—of whom—and  
why ?

*Man.* Of that which is within me :  
read it there —

Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

*Spirit.* We can but give thee that  
which we possess :

Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the  
power

O'er earth—the whole, or portion—or a  
sign

Which shall control the elements, where-  
of

We are the dominators.—each and all.  
These shall be thine.

*Man.* Oblivion, self-oblivion !

Can ye not wring from out the hidden  
realms

Ye offer so profusely what I ask ?

*Spirit.* It is not in our essence, in our  
skill ;

But—thou may'st die.

*Man.* Will death bestow it on me ?

*Spirit.* We are immortal, and do not  
forget ;

We are eternal ; and to us the past

Is, as the future, present. Art thou  
answer'd ?

*Man.* Ye mock me—but the power  
which brought ye here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not  
at my will !

The mind, the spirit, the Promethean  
spark,

The lightning of my being, is as bright,  
Pervading, and far darting as your own,  
And shall not yield to yours, though  
coop'd in clay !

Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

*Spirit.* We answer as we answer'd ;  
our reply

Is even in thine own words.

*Man.* Why say ye so ?

*Spirit.* If, as thou say'st, thine  
essence be as ours,

We have replied in telling thee, the thing  
Mortals call death hath nought to do  
with us.

*Man.* I then have call'd ye from your  
realms in vain :

Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

*Spirit.* Say,

What we possess we offer : it is thine :  
Bethink ere thou dismiss us ; ask again ;  
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and  
length of days—

*Man.* Accurs'd ! what have I to do  
with days ?

They are too long already.—Hence—be-  
gone !

*Spirit.* Yet pause : being here, our

will would do thee service :  
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift  
Which we can make not worthless in  
thine eyes ?

*Man.* No, none : yet stay—one mo-  
ment, ere we part.

I would behold ye face to face. I hear  
Your voices, sweet and melancholy  
sounds,

As music on the waters ; and I see  
The steady aspect of a clear large star ;  
But nothing more. Approach me as ye  
are,

Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

*Spirit.* We have no forms, beyond  
the elements  
Of which we are the mind and principle :  
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

*Man.* I have no choice; there is no  
form on earth  
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,  
Who is most powerful of ye, take such  
aspect  
As unto him may seem most fitting—  
Come!

*Seventh Spirit (appearing in the shape  
of a beautiful female figure).* Be-  
hold!

*Man.* Oh God! if it be thus, and thou  
Art not a madness and a mockery.  
I yet might be most happy, I will clasp  
thee,  
And we again will be——

[*The figure vanishes.*  
My heart is crush'd!  
[*MANFRED falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation  
which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,  
And the glow-worm in the grass,  
And the meteor on the grave,  
And the wisp on the morass;  
When the falling stars are shooting,  
And the answer'd owls are hooting,  
And the silent leaves are still  
In the shadow of the hill,  
Shall my soul be upon thine,  
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep  
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;  
There are shades which will not vanish.  
There are thoughts thou canst not  
banish;  
By a power to thee unknown,  
Thou canst never be alone;  
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,  
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;  
And for ever shalt thou dwell  
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,  
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye  
As a thing that, though unseen,  
Must be near thee, and hath been;  
And when in that secret dread  
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,  
Thou shalt marvel I am not  
As thy shadow on the spot,  
And the power which thou dost feel  
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse  
Hath baptized thee with a curse;  
And a spirit of the air  
Hath begirt thee with a snare;  
In the wind there is a voice  
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;  
And to thee shall night deny  
All the quiet of her sky;  
And the day shall have a sun,  
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil  
An essence which hath strength to kill;  
From thy own heart I then did wring  
The black blood in its blackest spring;  
From thy own smile I snatch'd the  
snake,  
For there it coil'd as in a brake;  
From thy own lip I drew the charm  
Which gave all these their chiefest  
harm;  
In proving every poison known,  
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,  
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,  
By that most seeming virtuous eye,  
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;  
By the perfection of thine art  
Which pass'd for human thine own  
heart;  
By thy delight in others' pain,  
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,  
I call upon thee! and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial  
Which doth devote thee to this trial;  
Nor to slumber, nor to die,  
Shall be in thy destiny;  
Though thy death shall still seem near  
To thy wish, but as a fear;  
Lo! the spell now works around thee,  
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;  
O'er thy heart and brain together  
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

## SCENE II

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time,  
Morning.—MANFRED alone upon the  
Cliffs.*

*Man.* The spirits I have raised abandon me,  
The spells which I have studied baffle me,  
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;  
I lean no more on superhuman aid;  
It hath no power upon the past, and for  
The future, till the past be gulf'd in  
darkness,

It is not of my search. My mother  
Earth!  
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you,  
ye Mountains,  
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.  
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,  
That openest over all, and unto all  
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my  
heart.  
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme  
edge  
I stand, and on the torrent's brink be-  
neath  
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to  
shrubs  
In dizziness of distance; when a leap.  
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would  
bring  
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed  
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?  
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;  
I see the peril—yet do not recede:  
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is  
firm:  
There is a power upon me which with-  
holds,  
And makes it my fatality to live.—  
If it be life to wear within myself  
This barrenness of spirit, and to be  
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have  
ceased  
To justify my deeds unto myself—  
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,  
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minis-  
ter, [An eagle passes.  
Whose happy flight is highest into  
heaven,  
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I  
should be  
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou  
art gone  
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but  
thine  
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,  
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!  
How beautiful is all this visible world!  
How glorious in its action and itself!  
But we, who name ourselves its sover-  
eigns, we,  
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit  
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence  
make  
A conflict of its elements, and breathe  
The breath of degradation and of pride.  
Contending with low wants and lofty  
will,  
Till our mortality predominates,  
And men are—what they name not to  
themselves,

And trust not to each other. Hark! the  
note, [The Shepherd's pipe is  
the distance is heard.  
The natural music of the mountain  
reed—  
For here the patriarchal days are not  
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,  
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the saun-  
tering herd;  
My soul would drink those echoes. Oh,  
that I were  
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,  
A living voice, a breathing harmony,  
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying  
With the blest tone which made me!

*Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.*

*Chamois Hunter.* Even so  
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble  
feet  
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will  
scarce  
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is  
here?  
Who seems not of my trade, and yet  
hath reach'd  
A height which none even of our moun-  
taineers,  
Save our best hunters, may attain: his  
garb  
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air  
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this  
distance:  
I will approach him nearer.  
*Man. (not perceiving the other).* To be  
thus—  
Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these  
blasted pines,  
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless,  
branchless,  
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,  
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—  
And to be thus, eternally but thus,  
Having been otherwise! now furrow'd  
o'er  
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments,—  
not by years,—  
And hours, all tortured into ages—  
hours  
Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of  
ice!  
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws  
down  
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and  
crash me!  
I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,  
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye  
pass,

And only fall on things that still would live;

On the young flourishing forest, or the hut

And hamlet of the harmless villager.

*C. Hun.* The mists begin to rise from up the valley;

I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance

To lose at once his way and life together.

*Man.* The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds

Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,

Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,

Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,

Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

*C. Hun.* I must approach him cautiously; if near,

A sudden step will startle him, and he seems tottering already.

*Man.* Mountains have fallen, Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock

Rocking their alpine brethren; filling up

The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;

Damming the rivers with a sudden dash, Which crush'd the waters into mist and made

Their fountains find another channel—thus,

Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—

Why stood I not beneath it?

*C. Hun.* Friend! have a care, Your next step may be fatal!—for the love

Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

*Man. (not hearing him).* Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;

My bones had then been quiet in their depth;

They had not then been strewn upon the rocks

For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—

In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!

Look not upon me thus reproachfully—  
You were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

[As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the CHAMOIS HUNTER

seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.

*C. Hun.* Hold, madman!—though aware of thy life, Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood:

Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

*Man.* I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—

I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl

Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art thou?

*C. Hun.* I'll answer that anon. Away with me—

The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—

Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling

A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,

And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—

The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour: Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,

And something like a pathway, which the torrent

Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 't is bravely done—

You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.

## ACT II

SCENE I.—A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

*C. Hun.* No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth:

Thy mind and body are alike unfit To trust each other, for some hours, at least:

When thou art better, I will be thy guide—

But whither?

*Man.* It imports not: I do know My route full well, and need no further guidance

*C. Hun.* Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—

One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags

Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these



May call thee lord? I only know their portals;

My way of life leads me but rarely down  
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,

Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,  
Which step from out our mountains to  
their doors,

I know from childhood—which of these  
is thine?

*Man.* No matter.

*C. Hun.* Well, sir, pardon me the  
question,  
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my  
wine;

'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day  
'T has thaw'd my veins among our  
glaciers

Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge  
me fairly.

*Man.* Away, away! there's blood upon  
the brim!

Will it then never—never sink in the  
earth?

*C. Hun.* What dost thou mean? thy  
senses wander from thee.

*Man.* I say 'tis blood—my blood! the  
pure warm stream  
Which ran in the veins of my fathers,  
and in ours

When we were in our youth, and had  
one heart,  
And loved each other as we should not  
love,

And this was shed: but still it rises up,  
Coloring the clouds, that shut me out  
from heaven,

Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

*C. Hun.* Man of strange words, and  
some half-maddening sin,  
Which makes thee people vacancy,  
whate'er

Thy dread and sufferance be, there's  
comfort yet—

The aid of holy men, and heavenly  
patience—

*Man.* Patience and patience!  
Hence—that word was made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of  
prey;

Preach it to mortals of a dust like  
thine,—

I am not of thine order.

*C. Hun.* Thanks to heaven!  
I would not be of thine for the free fame  
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine  
ill,

It must be borne, and these wild starts  
are useless.

*Man.* Do I not bear it?—Look on me—  
I live.

*C. Hun.* This is convulsion, and no  
healthful life.

*Man.* I tell thee, man! I have lived  
many years,

Many long years, but they are nothing  
now

To those which I must number: ages—  
ages—

Space and eternity—and consciousness,  
With the fierce thirst of death—and still  
unslaked!

*C. Hun.* Why, on thy brow the seal  
of middle age

Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder  
far.

*Man.* Think'st thou existence doth  
depend on time?

It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine  
Have made my days and nights im-  
perishable,

Endless, and all alike, as sands on the  
shore,

Innumerable atoms; and one desert,  
Barren and cold, on which the wild  
waves break,

But nothing rests, save carcasses and  
wrecks,

Rocks and the salt-surf weeds of bitter-  
ness.

*C. Hun.* Alas! he's mad—but yet  
I must not leave him.

*Man.* I would I were—for then the  
things I see

Would be but a distemper'd dream.

*C. Hun.* What is it  
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st  
upon?

*Man.* Myself, and thee—a peasant of  
the Alps—

Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,  
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and  
free;

Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent  
thoughts;

The days of health, and nights of sleep;  
thy toils,

By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes  
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,

With cross and garland over its green  
turf,

And thy grandchildren's love for epi-  
taph;

This do I see—and then I look within—  
It matters not—my soul was scorched al-  
ready!

*C. Hun.* And wouldst thou then ex-  
change thy lot for mine?

*Man.* No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange My lot with living being: I can bear— However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear— In life what others could not brook to dream,

But perish in their slumber.

*C. Hun.* And with this— This cautious feeling for another's pain, Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.

Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge Upon his enemies?

*Man.* Oh! no, no, no! My injuries came down on those who loved me—

On those whom I best loved: I never quelled

An enemy, save in my just defence— But my embrace was fatal.

*C. Hun.* Heaven give thee rest! And penitence restore thee to thyself; My prayers shall be for thee.

*Man.* I need them not— But can endure thy pity. I depart— 'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—

No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—

I know my path—the mountain peril's past:

And once again I charge thee, follow not! [*Exit MANFRED.*]

## SCENE II

*A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.*

*Enter MANFRED.*

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch

The torrent with the many hues of heaven,

And roll the sheeted silver's waving column

O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular, And fling its lines of foaming light along, And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,

The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death, As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;

I should be sole in this sweet solitude. And with the Spirit of the place divide The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[*MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*]

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light, And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form

The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow

To an unearthly stature, in an essence Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—

Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,

Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,

Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves

Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow, The blush of earth embracing with her heaven—

Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame

The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.

Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow, Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul, Which of itself shows immortality,

I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit

At times to commune with them—if that he

Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,

And gaze on thee a moment.

*Witch.* Son of Earth! I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;

I know thee for a man of many thoughts, And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,

Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.

I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me?

*Man.* To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.

The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I

Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce To the abodes of those who govern her— But they can nothing aid me. I have sought

From them what they could not bestow, and now

I search no further.

*Witch.* What could be the quest  
Which is not in the power of the most  
- powerful,

The rulers of the invisible?

*Man.* A boon ;  
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in  
vain.

*Witch.* I know not that ; let thy lips  
utter it.

*Man.* Well, though it torture me, 'tis  
but the same ;

My pang shall find a voice. From my  
youth upwards

My spirit walk'd not with the souls of  
men,

Nor look'd upon the earth with human  
eyes ;

The thirst of their ambition was not  
mine,

The aim of their existence was not  
mine ;

My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my  
powers,

Made me a stranger ; though I wore the  
form,

I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,  
Nor midst the creatures of clay that  
girded me

Was there but one who—but of her anon.  
I said with men, and with the thoughts of  
men,

I held but slight communion ; but instead  
My joy was in the wilderness,—to  
breathe

The difficult air of the iced mountain's  
top,

Where the birds dare not build, nor in-  
sect's wing

Flit o'er the herbless granite ; or to plunge  
Into the torrent, and to roll along

On the swift whirl of the new breaking  
wave

Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.  
In these my early strength exulted ; or

To follow through the night the moving  
moon,

The stars and their development ; or  
catch

The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew  
dim ;

Or to look, list'ning, on the scattered  
leaves.

While Autumn winds were at their even-  
ing song.

These were my pastimes, and to be alone ;  
For if the beings, of whom I was one.—

Hating to be so.—cross'd me in my path,  
I felt myself degraded back to them,

And was all clay again. And then I dived,

In my lone wanderings, to the caves of  
death,

Searching its cause in its effect ; and  
drew

From wither'd bones, and skull, and  
heap'd up dust,

Conclusions most forbidden. Then I  
pass'd

The nights of years in sciences untaught  
Save in the old time ; and with time and  
toil,

And terrible ordeal, and such penance  
As in itself hath power upon the air,

And spirits that do compass air and  
earth,

Space, and the peopled infinite, I made  
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity.

Such as, before me, did the Magi, and  
He who from out their fountain dwell-  
ings raised

Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,  
As I do thee ;—and with my knowledge  
grew

The thirst of knowledge, and the power  
and joy

Of this most bright intelligence, until—  
*Witch.* Proceed.

*Man.* Oh ! I but thus prolong'd my  
words,

Boasting these idle attributes, because  
As I approach the core of my heart's  
grief—

But to my task, I have not named to thee  
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or  
being.

With whom I wore the chain of human  
ties ;

If I had such, they seem'd not such to me ;  
Yet there was one—

*Witch.* Spare not thyself—proceed.  
*Man.* She was like me in lineaments ;  
her eyes.

Her hair, her features, all, to the very  
tone

Even of her voice, they said were like  
to mine ;

But soften'd all, and temper'd into  
beauty :

She had the same lone thoughts and  
wanderings.

The quest of hidden knowledge, and a  
mind

To comprehend the universe : nor these  
Alone, but with them gentler powers  
than mine.

Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had  
not ;

And tenderness—but that I had for her ;  
Humility—and that I never had.

Her faults were mine—her virtues were  
her own—

I loved her, and destroy'd her !

*Witch.* With thy hand ?

*Man.* Not with my hand, but heart,  
which broke her heart ;

It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have  
shed

Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood  
was shed ;

I saw—and could not stanch it.

*Witch* And for this—

A being of the race thou dost despise,  
The order, which thine own would rise  
above,

Mingling with us and ours,—thou dost  
forego

The gifts of our great knowledge, and  
shrink'st back

To recreant mortality—Away !

*Man.* Daughter of Air ! I tell thee,  
since that hour—

But words are breath—look on me in my  
sleep,

Or watch my watchings—Come and sit  
by me !

My solitude is solitude no more,  
But peopled with the Furies ;—I have  
gnash'd

My teeth in darkness till returning morn,  
Then cursed myself till sunset :—I have  
pray'd

For madness as a blessing—'tis denied  
me.

I have affronted death—but in the war  
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,  
And fatal things pass'd harmless ; the  
cold hand

Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,  
Back by a single hair, which would not  
break

In fantasy, imagination, all  
The affluence of my soul—which one day  
was

A Croesus in creation—I plunged deep  
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me  
back

Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.  
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetful-  
ness

I sought in all, save where 'tis to be  
found,

And that I have to learn ; my sciences,  
My long-pursued and superhuman art,  
Is mortal here : I dwell in my despair—  
And live—and live for ever.

*Witch.* It may be

That I can aid thee.

*Man.* To do this thy power

Must wake the dead, or lay me low with  
them.

Do so—in any shape—in any hour—

With any torture—so it be the last.

*Witch.* That is not in my province ;  
but if thou

Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do  
My bidding, it may help thee to thy  
wishes.

*Man.* I will not swear—Obey ! and  
whom ? the spirits

Whose presence I command, and be the  
slave

Of those who served me—Never !

*Witch.* Is this all ?

Hast thou no gentler answer ?—Yet be-  
think thee,

And pause ere thou rejectest.

*Man.* I have said it.

*Witch.* Enough ! I may retire then—  
say !

*Man.* Retire !

[*The WITCH disappears.*]

*Man. (alone).* We are the fools of time  
and terror : Days

Steal on us, and steal from us ; yet we live,  
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.  
In all the days of this detested yoke—  
This vital weight upon the struggling  
heart,

Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick  
with pain,

Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—  
In all the days of past and future, for  
In life there is no present, we can number  
How few—how less than few—wherein  
the soul

Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws  
back

As from a stream in winter, though the  
chill

Be but a moment's. I have one resource  
Still in my science—I can call the dead,  
And ask them what it is we dread to be ;  
The sternest answer can but be the Grave.  
And that is nothing. If they answer  
not—

The buried Prophet answered to the Hag  
Of Endor ; and the Spartan Monarch  
drew

From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping  
spirit

An answer and his destiny—he slew  
That which he loved, unknowing what  
he slew,

And died unpardon'd—though he call'd  
in aid

The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia  
roused

The Arcadian Evocators to compel  
 The indignant shadow to depose her  
     wrath,  
 Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied  
 In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.  
 If I had never lived, that which I love  
 Had still been living; had I never loved,  
 That which I love would still be beautiful,  
 Happy and giving happiness. What is  
     she?  
 What is she now?—a sufferer for my  
     sins—  
 A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.  
 Within few hours I shall not call in  
     vain—  
 Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:  
 Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze  
 On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,  
 And feel a strange cold thaw upon my  
     heart.  
 But I can act even what I most abhor,  
 And champion human fears.—The night  
     approaches. [Exit.]

## SCENE III

*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.*

*Enter FIRST DESTINY.*

The moon is rising broad, and round, and  
     bright;  
 And here on snows, where never human  
     foot  
 Of common mortal trod, we nightly  
     tread,  
 And leave no traces: o'er the savage sea,  
 The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,  
 We skim its rugged breakers, which put  
     on  
 The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,  
 Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's  
     image:  
 And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,  
 The fretwork of some earthquake—  
     where the clouds  
 Pause to repose themselves in passing  
     by—  
 Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;  
 Here do I wait my sisters, on our way  
 To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night  
 Is our great festival—'t is strange they  
     come not.

*A Voice without, singing.*

The Captive Usurper.  
 Hurl'd down from the throne,

Lay buried in torpor,  
 Forgotten and lone;  
 I broke through his slumbers,  
 I shiver'd his chain,  
 I leagu'd him with numbers—  
 He's Tyrant again!  
 With the blood of a million he'll answer  
     my care,  
 With a nation's destruction—his flight  
     and despair.

*Second Voice, without.*

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,  
 But I left not a sail, and I left not a  
     mast;  
 There is not a plank of the hull or the  
     deck,  
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er  
     his wreck;  
 Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by  
     the hair,  
 And he was a subject well worthy my  
     care;  
 A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea.—  
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc  
     for me!

*FIRST DESTINY, answering.*

The city lies sleeping;  
 The morn, to deplore it,  
 May dawn on it weeping:  
 Sullenly, slowly,  
 The black plague flew o'er it—  
 Thousands lie lowly;  
 Tens of thousands shall perish;  
 The living shall fly from  
 The sick they should cherish;  
 But nothing can vanquish  
 The touch that they die from.  
 Sorrow and anguish,  
 And evil and dread,  
 Envelop a nation;  
 The blest are the dead,  
 Who see not the sight  
 Of their own desolation;  
 This work of a night—  
 This wreck of a realm—this deed of mine—  
     doing—  
 For ages I've done, and shall still be re-  
     newing!

*Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES*

*The Three.*

Our hands contain the hearts of men,  
 Our footsteps are their graves;  
 We only give to take again  
 The spirits of our slaves!

*First Des.* Welcome!—Where's Nemesis?

*Second Des.* At some great work;  
But what I know not, for my hands were full.

*Third Des.* Behold she cometh.

*Enter NEMESIS.*

*First Des.* Say, where hast thou been?  
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

*Nem.* I was detain'd repairing  
shatter'd thrones,  
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,  
Avenging men upon their enemies,  
And making them repent their own revenge;  
Goaded the wise to madness; from the dull  
Shaping out oracles to rule the world  
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,  
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,  
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak  
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!  
We have outstay'd the hour—mount we  
our clouds! [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

*The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.*

*Hymn of the SPIRITS.*

**H**ail to our Master!—Prince of Earth  
and Air!

Who walks the clouds and waters—in  
his hand

**T**he sceptre of the elements, which tear  
Themselves to chaos at his high  
command!

**H**e breatheth—and a tempest shakes  
the sea;

He speaketh—and the clouds reply in  
thunder;

**H**e gazeth—from his glance the sun-  
beams flee;

He moveth—earthquakes rend the  
world asunder.

**B**eneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;  
His shadow in the Pestilence; his path

**T**he comets herald through the crackling  
skies;

And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.  
To him War offers daily sacrifice;

To him Death pays his tribute; Life  
is his,

With all its infinite of agonies—  
And his the spirit of whatever is!

*Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.*

*First Des.* Glory to Arimanes! on the  
earth  
His power increaseth—both my sisters  
did

His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

*Second Des.* Glory to Arimanes! we  
who bow

The necks of men, bow down before his  
throne!

*Third Des.* Glory to Arimanes! we  
await His nod!

*Nem.* Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are  
thine,

And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,  
And most things wholly so; still to  
increase

Our power, increasing thine, demands  
our care.

And we are vigilant. Thy late commands  
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

*Enter MANFRED.*

*A Spirit.* What is here?  
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal  
wretch,

Bow down and worship!

*Second Spirit.* I do know the man—  
A Magian of great power, and fearful  
skill!

*Third Spirit.* Bow down and worship,  
slave!—

What, know'st thou not  
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble,  
and obey!

*All the Spirits.* Prostrate thyself, and  
thy condemned clay,

Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.  
*Man.* I know it;

And yet ye see I kneel not.

*Fourth Spirit.* 'T will be taught thee.

*Man.* 'T is taught already;—many a  
night on the earth,

On the bare ground, have I bow'd down  
my face,

And strew'd my head with ashes; I have  
known

The fulness of humiliation, for  
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt  
To my own desolation.

*Fifth Spirit.* Dost thou dare  
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne

What the whole earth accords, behold-  
ing not

The terror of his glory?—Crouch, I say.

*Man.* Bid him bow down to that  
which is above him.

The overruling Infinite—the Maker  
Who made him not for worship—let  
him kneel,

And we will kneel together.

*The Spirits.* Crush the worm!  
Tear him in pieces!—

*First Des.* Hence! avaunt!—he's  
mine.

Prince of the Powers invisible! This  
man

Is of no common order, as his port  
And presence here denote; his sufferings  
Have been of an immortal nature, like  
Our own; his knowledge, and his powers  
and will,

As far as is compatible with clay,  
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have  
been such

As clay hath seldom borne; his aspira-  
tions

Have been beyond the dwellers of the  
earth,

And they have only taught him what  
we know—

That knowledge is not happiness, and  
science

But an exchange of ignorance for that  
Which is another kind of ignorance.

This is not all—the passions, attributes  
Of earth and heaven, from which no  
power, nor being,

Nor breath from the worm upwards is  
exempt,

Have pierced his heart, and in their  
consequence

Made him a thing which I, who pity not,  
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,

And thine, it may be; be it so, or not,  
No other Spirit in this region hath

A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

*Nem.* What doth he here then?

*First Des.* Let him answer that.

*Man.* Ye know what I have known;  
and without power

I could not be amongst ye: but there are  
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in  
quest

Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

*Nem.* What wouldst thou?

*Man.* Thou canst not reply to me.  
Call up the dead—my question is for  
them.

*Nem.* Great Arimanes, doth thy will  
avouch

The wishes of this mortal?

*Ari.* Yea.

*Nem.* Whom wouldst thou  
Uncharnel?

*Man.* One without a tomb—call up  
Astarte.

#### NEMESIS

Shadow! or Spirit!

Whatever thou art,

Which still doth inherit

The whole or a part

Of the form of thy birth,

Of the mould of thy clay,

Which return'd to the earth,

Re-appear to the day!

Bear what thou borest,

The heart and the form,

And the aspect thou worst

Redeem from the worm.

Appear!—Appear!—Appear!  
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

[*The Phantom of ASTARTE rises  
and stands in the midst.*

*Man.* Can this be death? there's  
bloom upon her cheek:

But now I see it is no living hue,  
But a strange hectic—like the unnatural

red  
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd  
leaf.

It is the same! Oh, God! that I should  
dread

To look upon the same—Astarte!—No.  
I cannot speak to her—but bid her

speak—

Forgive me or condemn me.

#### NEMESIS

By the power which hath broken

The grave which enthral'd thee,

Speak to him who hath spoken,

Or those who have call'd thee!

*Man.* She is silent,  
And in that silence I am more than an-  
swer'd.

*Nem.* My power extends no further.  
Prince of Air!

It rests with thee alone—command her  
voice.

*Ari.* Spirit—obey this sceptre!

*Nem.* Silent still!  
She is not of our order, but belongs

To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest  
is vain.

And we are baffled also.

*Man.* Hear me, hear me—  
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:  
I have so much endured—so much  
endure—

Look on me ! the grave hath not  
 changed thee more  
 Than I am changed for thee. Thou  
 lovedst me  
 Too much, as I loved thee : we were not  
 made  
 To torture thus each other, though it  
 were  
 The deadliest sin to love as we have  
 loved.  
 Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do  
 bear  
 This punishment for both—that thou  
 wilt be  
 One of the blessed—and that I shall die ;  
 For hitherto all hateful things conspire  
 To bind me in existence—in a life  
 Which makes me shrink from immor-  
 tality—  
 A future like the past. I cannot rest.  
 I know not what I ask, nor what I seek ;  
 I feel but what thou art, and what I am ;  
 And I would hear yet once before I perish  
 The voice which was my music—Speak  
 to me !  
 For I have call'd on thee in the still  
 night.  
 Startled the slumbering birds from the  
 hush'd boughs,  
 And woke the mountain wolves, and  
 made the caves  
 Acquainted with thy vainly echoed  
 name,  
 Which answer'd me — many things  
 answer'd me—  
 Spirits and men—but thou wert silent  
 all.  
 Yet speak to me ! I have outwatch'd  
 the stars,  
 And gazed o'er heaven in vain search of  
 thee.  
 Speak to me ! I have wander'd o'er the  
 earth.  
 And never found thy likeness—Speak to  
 me !  
 Look on the fiends around—they feel for  
 me :  
 I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—  
 Speak to me ! though it be in wrath ; —  
 but say—  
 I reck not what — but let me hear thee  
 once—  
 This once—once more !  
*Phantom of Astarte.* Manfred.  
*Man.* Say on, say on—  
 I live but in the sound—it is thy voice !  
*Phan.* Manfred ! To-morrow ends  
 thine earthly ills.  
 Farewell !

*Man.* Yet one word more—am I for-  
 given ?  
*Phan.* Farewell !  
*Man.* Say, shall we meet again ?  
*Phan.* Farewell !  
*Man.* One word for mercy ! Say, thou  
 lovest me.  
*Phan.* Manfred !  
*[The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.]*  
*Nem.* She's gone, and will not be  
 recall'd ;  
 Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to  
 the earth.  
*A Spirit.* He is convulsed.—This is to  
 be a mortal  
 And seek the things beyond mortality.  
*Another Spirit.* Yet, see, he mas-  
 tereth himself, and makes  
 His torture tributary to his will.  
 Had he been one of us, he would have  
 made  
 An awful spirit.  
*Nem.* Hast thou further question  
 Of our great sovereign, or his worship-  
 pers ?  
*Man.* None.  
*Nem.* Then for a time farewell.  
*Man.* We meet then ! where ? On the  
 earth ?—  
 Even as thou wilt : and for the grace ac-  
 corded  
 I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well !  
*[Exit MANFRED.]*  
*(Scene closes.)*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Man.* What is the hour ?  
*Her.* It wants but one till sunset,  
 And promises a lovely twilight.  
*Man.* Say,  
 Are all things so disposed of in the tower  
 As I directed ?  
*Her.* All, my lord, are ready :  
 Here is the key and casket.  
*Man.* It is well :  
 Thou may'st retire. *[Exit HERMAN.]*  
*Man. (alone).* There is a calm upon me—  
 Inexplicable stillness ! which till now  
 Did not belong to what I knew of life.  
 If that I did not know philosophy  
 To be of all our vanities the motliest,  
 The merest word that ever fool'd the ear  
 From out the schoolman's jargon, I  
 should deem



The golden secret, the sought "Kalon,"  
 found,  
 And seated in my soul. It will not last.  
 But it is well to have known it, though  
 but once :  
 It hath enlarged my thoughts with a  
 new sense,  
 And I within my tablets would note  
 down  
 That there is such a feeling. Who is  
 there ?

*Re-enter HERMAN.*

*Her.* My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice  
 craves  
 To greet your presence.

*Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.*

*Abbot.* Peace be with Count Manfred !

*Man.* Thanks, holy father ! welcome  
 to these walls ;

Thy presence honors them, and blesseth  
 those  
 Who dwell within them.

*Abbot.* Would it were so, Count !—  
 But I would fain confer with thee alone.

*Man.* Herman, retire.—What would  
 my reverend guest ?

*Abbot.* Thus, without prelude :—Age  
 and zeal, my office,  
 And good intent, must plead my privilege ;  
 Our near, though not acquainted neighborhood,  
 May also be my herald. Rumors  
 strange,  
 And of unholy nature, are abroad.  
 And busy with thy name ; a noble name  
 For centuries : may he who bears it now  
 Transmit it unimpaired !

*Man.* Proceed.—I listen.

*Abbot.* 'T is said thou holdest converse  
 with the things  
 Which are forbidden to the search of  
 man ;  
 That with the dwellers of the dark  
 abodes,  
 The many evil and unheavenly spirits  
 Which walk the valley of the shade of  
 death,  
 Thou communest. I know that with  
 mankind,  
 Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely  
 Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy  
 solitude  
 Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

*Man.* And what are they who do  
 avouch these things ?

*Abbot.* My pious brethren—the scared  
 peasantry—  
 Even thy own vassals—who do look on  
 thee

With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in  
 peril.

*Man.* Take it.

*Abbot.* I come to save, and not destroy :

I would not pry into thy secret soul ;  
 But if these things be sooth, there still is  
 time

For penitence and pity : reconcile thee  
 With the true church, and through the  
 church to heaven.

*Man.* I hear thee. This is my reply :  
 whate'er

I may have been, or am, doth rest between

Heaven and myself. I shall not choose  
 a mortal

To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd  
 Against your ordinances ? prove and  
 punish !

*Abbot.* My son ! I did not speak of  
 punishment,

But penitence and pardon ;—with myself  
 The choice of such remains—and for the  
 last,

Our institutions and our strong belief  
 Have given me power to smooth the  
 path from sin

To higher hope and better thoughts ; the  
 first

I leave to heaven,—“ Vengeance is mine  
 alone ! ”

So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness

His servant echoes back the awful word.

*Man.* Old man ! there is no power in  
 holy men,

Nor charin in prayer, nor purifying form  
 Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,  
 Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,  
 The innate tortures of that deep despair.  
 Which is remorse without the fear of  
 hell,

But all in all sufficient to itself  
 Would make a hell of heaven—can ex-  
 orcise

From out the unbound spirit the quick sense

Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge

Upon itself ; there is no future pang  
 Can deal that justice on the self-con-  
 demn'd

He deals on his own soul.

*Abbot.* All this is well ;  
For this will pass away, and be succeeded  
By an auspicious hope, which shall look  
up

With calm assurance to that blessed  
place,

Which all who seek may win, whatever  
be

Their earthly errors, so they be atoned :  
And the commencement of atonement is  
The sense of its necessity. Say on—

And all our church can teach thee shall  
be taught ;

And all we can absolve thee shall be  
pardon'd.

*Man.* When Rome's sixth emperor  
was near his last,

The victim of a self-inflicted wound,  
To shun the torments of a public death  
From senates once his slaves, a certain  
soldier,

With show of loyal pity, would have  
stanch'd

The gushing throat with his officious  
robe ;

The dying Roman thrust him back, and  
said—

Some empire still in his expiring glance—  
"It is too late—is this fidelity ?"

*Abbot.* And what of this ?

*Man.* I answer with the Roman—

"It is too late !"

*Abbot.* It never can be so,  
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,  
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast  
thou no hope ?

'Tis strange—even those who do de-  
spair above,

Yet shape themselves some fantasy on  
earth,

To which frail twig they cling, like  
drowning men.

*Man.* Ay—father ! I have had those  
earthly visions,

And noble aspirations in my youth,

To make my own the mind of other  
men,

The enlightener of nations ; and to rise  
I knew not whither—it might be to fall ;

But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,  
Which having leapt from its more daz-  
zling height,

Even in the foaming strength of its  
abyss,

(Which casts up misty columns that be-  
come

Clouds raining from the re-ascended  
skies,)

Lies low but mighty still.—But this is  
past,

My thoughts mistook themselves.

*Abbot.* And wherefore so ?

*Man.* I could not tame my nature  
down ; for he

Must serve who fain would sway ; and  
soothe, and sue,

And watch all time, and pry into all  
place,

And be a living lie, who would become  
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and  
such

The mass are ; I disdain'd to mingle with  
A herd, though to be leader—and of  
wolves.

The lion is alone, and so am I.

*Abbot.* And why not live and act with  
other men ?

*Man.* Because my nature was averse  
from life ;

And yet not cruel ; for I would not make,  
But find a desolation. Like the wind,

The red-hot breath of the most lone  
simoom,

Which dwells but in the desert, and  
sweeps o'er

The barren sands which bear no shrubs  
to blast,

And revels o'er their wild and arid  
waves,

And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,  
But being met is deadly,—such hath  
been

The course of my existence ; but there  
came

Things in my path which are no more.

*Abbot.* Alas !  
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid

From me and from my calling ; yet so  
young,

I still would—

*Man.* Look on me ! there is an order  
Of mortals on the earth, who do become

Old in their youth, and die ere middle  
age,

Without the violence of warlike death :  
Some perishing of pleasure, some of  
study,

Some worn with toil, some of mere  
weariness.

Some of disease, and some insanity.  
And some of wither'd or of broken  
hearts ;

For this last is a malady which slays  
More than are number'd in the lists of  
Fate.

Taking all shapes, and bearing many  
names.

Look upon me! for even of all these things

Have I partaken; and of all these things,  
One were enough; then wonder not that I  
Am what I am, but that I ever was.  
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

*Abbot.* Yet, hear me still—

*Man.* Old man! I do respect  
Thine order, and revere thine years; I  
deem

Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:  
Think me not churlish; I would spare  
thyself,

Far more than me, in shunning at this  
time

All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

*Abbot.* This should have been a noble  
creature; he  
Hath all the energy which would have  
made

A goodly frame of glorious elements,  
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,  
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,  
And mind and dust, and passions and  
pure thoughts

Mix'd, and contending without end or  
order,—

All dormant or destructive: he will  
perish,

And yet he must not; I will try once  
more

For such are worth redemption; and my  
duty

Is to dare all things for a righteous end.  
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though  
surely. [*Exit* ABBOT.]

#### SCENE II

*Another Chamber.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Her.* My lord, you bade me wait on  
you at sunset:

He sinks behind the mountain.

*Man.* Doth he so?

I will look on him. [*MANFRED advances  
to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol  
Of early nature, and the vigorous race  
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons  
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex  
More beautiful than they, which did  
draw down

The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—  
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship,  
ere

The mystery of thy making was re-  
veal'd!

Thou earliest minister of the Almighty.  
Which gladden'd, on their mountain  
tops, the hearts

Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they  
pour'd

Themselves in orisons! Thou material  
God!

And representative of the unknown—  
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou  
chief star!

Centre of many stars! which mak'st our  
earth

Endurable, and temperest the hues  
And hearts of all who walk within thy  
rays!

Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the  
climes,

And those who dwell in them! for near  
or far,

Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee  
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost  
rise,

And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee  
well!

I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first  
glance

Of love and wonder was for thee, then  
take [one

My latest look: thou wilt not beam on  
To whom the gifts of life and warmth  
have been

Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:  
I follow. [*Exit* MANFRED.]

#### SCENE III

*The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred  
at some distance—A Terrace before a  
Tower—Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL and other Dependents  
of MANFRED.

*Her.* 'Tis strange enough; night after  
night, for years,  
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower.

Without a witness. I have been within  
it,—

So have we all been oft-times; but from it,  
Or its contents, it were impossible

To draw conclusions absolute, of aught  
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is

One chamber where none enter: I would  
give

The fee of what I have to come these  
three years,

To pore upon its mysteries.

*Manuel.* 'Twere dangerous;—  
Content thyself with what thou know'st  
already.

*Her.* Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,  
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt  
within the castle—  
How many years is't?

*Manuel.* Ere Count Manfred's birth,  
I served his father, whom he nought re-  
sembles.

*Her.* There be more sons in like pre-  
dicament.  
But wherein do they differ?

*Manuel.* I speak not  
Of features or of form, but mind and  
habits;  
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and  
free,—

A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not  
With books and solitude, nor made the  
night

A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,  
Merrier than day; he did not walk the  
rocks

And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside  
From men and their delights.

*Her.* Beshrew the hour,  
But those were jocund times! I would  
that such  
Would visit the old walls again; they  
look

As if they had forgotten them.

*Manuel.* These walls  
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I  
have seen

Some strange things in them, Herman.

*Her.* Come, be friendly;  
Relate me some to while away our  
watch:

I've heard thee darkly speak of an event  
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this  
same tower.

*Manuel.* That was a night indeed! I  
do remember  
Twas twilight, as it may be now, and  
such

Another evening;—yon red cloud, which  
rests

On Eiger's pinnacle, so rested then,—  
So like that it might be the same; the  
wind

Was faint and gusty, and the mountain  
snows

Began to glitter with the climbing moon;  
Count Manfred was, as now, within his  
tower,—

How occupied, we knew not, but with  
him

The sole companion of his wanderings  
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly  
things

That lived, the only thing he seem'd to  
love,—

As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,  
The lady Astarte, his—

Hush! who comes here?

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* Where is your master?

*Her.* Yonder in the tower.

*Abbot.* I must speak with him.

*Manuel.* 'Tis impossible;  
He is most private, and must not be thus  
Intruded on.

*Abbot.* Upon myself I take  
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—  
But I must see him.

*Her.* Thou hast seen him once  
This eve already.

*Abbot.* Herman! I command thee,  
Knock, and apprise the Count of my ap-  
proach.

*Her.* We dare not.

*Abbot.* Then it seems I must be herald  
Of my own purpose.

*Manuel.* Reverend father, stop—  
I pray you pause.

*Abbot.* Why so?

*Manuel.* But step this way,  
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

*Interior of the Tower.*

*MANFRED alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the  
tops

Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beau-  
tiful!

I linger yet with Nature, for the Night  
Hath been to me a more familiar face  
Than that of man; and in her starry  
shade

Of dim and solitary loveliness,  
I learn'd the language of another world.

I do remember me, that in my youth,  
When I was wandering,—upon such a  
night

I stood within the Coliseum's wall,  
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome:

The trees which grew along the broken  
arches

Waved dark in the blue midnight, and  
the stars

Shone through the rents of ruin; from  
afar

The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber;  
and

More near from out the Cæsars' palace  
 came  
 The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,  
 Of distant sentinels the fitful song  
 Begun and died upon the gentle wind.  
 Some cypresses beyond the time-worn  
 breach  
 Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they  
 stood  
 Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars  
 dwelt,  
 And dwell the tuneless birds of night,  
 amidst  
 A grove which springs through levell'd  
 battlements,  
 And twines its roots with the imperial  
 hearths,  
 Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;  
 But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,  
 A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,  
 While Cæsar's chambers, and the Au-  
 gustan halls,  
 Gravel on earth in indistinct decay.  
 And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon,  
 upon  
 All this, and cast a wide and tender light,  
 Which soften'd down the hoar austerity  
 Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,  
 As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;  
 Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
 And making that which was not, till the  
 place  
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er  
 With silent worship of the great of old, —  
 The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who  
 still rule  
 Our spirits from their urns.  
 'Twas such a night!  
 'T is strange that I recall it at this time;  
 But I have found our thoughts take  
 wildest flight  
 Even at the moment when they should  
 array  
 Themselves in pensive order.

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* My good lord!  
 I crave a second grace for this approach;  
 But yet let not my humble zeal offend  
 By its abruptness — all it hath of ill  
 Recoils on me; its good in the effect  
 May light upon your head — could I say  
*heart* —  
 Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers,  
 I should  
 Recall a noble spirit which hath wan-  
 der'd;  
 But is not yet all lost.

*Man.* Thou know'st me not;

My days are number'd, and my deeds re-  
 corded:

Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!  
*Abbot.* Thou dost not mean to menace  
 me?

*Man.* Not I;

I simply tell thee peril is at hand,  
 And would preserve thee.

*Abbot.* What dost thou mean?  
*Man.* Look there!

What dost thou see?

*Abbot.* Nothing.

*Man.* Look there I say.  
 And steadfastly;—now tell me what  
 thou seest?

*Abbot.* That which should shake me,  
 but I fear it not:

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,  
 Like an infernal god, from out the earth:  
 His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form  
 Robed as with angry clouds: he stands be-  
 tween

Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

*Man.* Thou hast no cause—he shall not  
 harm thee—but

His sight may shock thine old limbs into  
 palsy.

I say to thee—Retire!

*Abbot.* And I reply—  
 Never—till I have battled with this  
 fiend:—

What doth he here?

*Man.* Why—ay—what doth he here?  
 I did not send for him.—he is unbidden.

*Abbot.* Alas! lost mortal! what with  
 guests like these

Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:  
 Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on  
 him?

Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow  
 The thunder-scars are graven: from his  
 eye

Glares forth the immortality of hell—

Avaunt!—

*Man.* Pronounce—what is thy mission?  
*Spirit.* Come!—

*Abbot.* What art thou, unknown being?  
 answer!—speak!

*Spirit.* The genius of this mortal.—  
 Come! 'tis time.

*Man.* I am prepared for all things, but  
 deny

The power which summons me. Whosent  
 thee here?

*Spirit.* Thou'lt know anon—Come!  
 Come!

*Man.* I have commanded  
 Things of an essence greater far than  
 thine,

And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

*Spirit.* Mortal! thine hour is come—  
Away! I say.

*Man.* I knew, and know my hour is come, but not  
To render up my soul to such as thee:  
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

*Spirit.* Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*]

*Abbot.* Avaunt! ye evil ones!—  
Avaunt! I say;

Ye have no power where piety hath power,

And I do charge ye in the name—

*Spirit.* Old man!

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;

Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,

It were in vain: this man is forfeited.

Once more I summon him—Away!

*Man.* I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul

Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;

Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath

To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength

To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take

Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

*Spirit.* Reluctant mortal!

Is this the Magian who would so pervade

The world invisible, and make himself

Almost our equal? Can it be that thou

Art thus in love with life? the very life

Which made thee wretched!

*Man.* Thou false fiend, thou liest!  
My life is in its last hour,—that I know,  
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;

I do not combat against death, but thee  
And thy surrounding angels; my past power,

Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,

But by superior science—penance, daring,

And length of watching, strength of mind, and skill

In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth

Saw men and spirits walking side by side.

And gave ye no supremacy: I stand  
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—  
Spurn back, and scorn ye!

*Spirit.* But thy many crimes  
Have made thee—

*Man.* What are they to such as thee?  
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,

And greater criminals?—Back to thy  
Thou hast no power upon me, that I feel;

[*know:*]  
Thou never shalt possess me, that I  
What I have done is done; I bear within  
A torture which could nothing gain  
from thine:

The mind which is immortal makes itself  
Requital for its good or evil thoughts,—  
Is its own origin of ill and end

And its own place and time: its innate sense,

When stripp'd of this mortality, derives  
No color from the fleeting things with-  
out,

But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,

Born from the knowledge of its own desert.

*Thou* didst not tempt me, and thou  
couldst not tempt me;

I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—

But was my own destroyer and will be  
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!

The hand of death is on me—but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*]

*Abbot.* Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—

And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat

The accents rattle: Give thy prayers to heaven—

Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

*Man.* 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;

But all things swim around me, and the earth

Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well!

Give me thy hand.

*Abbot.* Cold—cold—even to the heart—

But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?

*Man.* Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die.

[*MANFRED expires.*]  
*Abbot.* He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight;

Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

*September, 1816—May, 1817. June 18, 1817.*

## TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,  
And my bark is on the sea ;  
But, before I go, Tom Moore,  
Here's a double health to thee !

Here's a sigh to those who love me,  
And a smile to those who hate ;  
And, whatever sky's above me,  
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,  
Yet it still shall bear me on ;  
Though a desert should surround me,  
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,  
As I gasp'd upon the brink,  
Ere my fainting spirit fell,  
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,  
The libation I would pour  
Should be—peace with thine and mine,  
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

July, 1817. 1821.

## FROM CHILDE HAROLD.

## CANTO IV

I stoop in Venice, on the Bridge of  
Sighs ; [Stanza 1  
A palace and a prison on each hand :  
I saw from out the wave her structures  
rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's  
wand :  
A thousand years their cloudy wings  
expand  
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles  
O'er the far times, when many a sub-  
ject land  
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,  
Where Venice sate in state, throned on  
her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,  
Rising with her tiara of proud towers  
At airy distance, with majestic motion,  
A ruler of the waters and their powers ;  
And such she was :—her daughters had  
their dowers  
From spoils of nations, and the exhaust-  
less East  
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling  
showers,  
In purple was she robed, and of her feast  
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their  
dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,  
And silent rows the songless gondolier ;  
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
And music meets not always now the  
ear :

Those days are gone—but Beauty still is  
here.

States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth  
not die,

Nor yet forget how Venice once was  
dear,

The pleasant place of all festivity,  
The revel of the earth, the masque of  
Italy !

But unto us she hath a spell beyond  
Her name in story, and her long array  
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms  
despond

Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;  
Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,  
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn  
away—

The keystones of the arch ! though all  
were o'er,

For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;  
Essentially immortal, they create  
And multiply in us a brighter ray  
And more beloved existence : that which  
Fate

Prohibits to dull life, in this our state  
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits sup-  
plied,

First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;  
Watering the heart whose early flowers  
have died,

And with a fresher growth replenishing  
the void.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,  
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of  
war. [St. 16

Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse.  
Her voice their only ransom from afar :  
See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the  
car

Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the  
reins

Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar  
Starts from its belt—he rends his cap—  
tive's chains,

And bids him thank the bard for free-  
dom and his strains.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were  
thine.

Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,  
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,  
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot  
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot  
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,  
Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen  
should not  
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall  
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy  
watery wall.

I loved her from my boyhood; she to me  
Was as a fairy city of the heart,  
Rising like water-columns from the sea,  
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;  
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,  
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,  
Although I found her thus, we did not part,  
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,  
Than when she was a boast, a marvel  
and a show.

I can repeople with the past—and of  
The present there is still for eye and thought,  
And meditation chasten'd down, enough;  
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;  
And of the happiest moments which  
were wrought  
Within the web of my existence, some  
From thee, fair Venice! have their colors caught:  
There are some feelings Time cannot  
benumb,  
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now  
be cold and dumb.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back  
To meditate amongst decay, and stand [St. 25]  
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track  
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land  
Which was the mightiest in its old command,  
And is the loveliest, and must ever be  
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand;  
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,  
The beautiful, the brave, the lords of  
earth and sea,

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!  
And even since, and now, fair Italy!  
Thou art the garden of the world, the home  
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;  
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?  
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste  
More rich than other climes' fertility;  
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced  
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night;  
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea  
Of glory streams along the Alpine height  
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free  
From clouds, but of all colors seems to be,—  
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,—  
Where the Day joins the past Eternity,  
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest  
Floats through the azure air—an island  
of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns  
With her o'er half the lovely heaven;  
but still  
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains  
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhaetian hill,  
As Day and Night contending were, until  
Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows  
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil  
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,  
Which streams upon her stream, and  
glass'd within it glows,

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,  
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,  
From the rich sunset to the rising star,  
Their magical variety diffuse:  
And now they change; a paler shadow strews  
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day  
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues  
With a new color as it gasps away,



The last still loveliest,—till—'t is gone  
—and all is gray.

Italia ! oh Italia ! thou who hast [St. 42  
The fatal gift of beauty, which became  
A funeral dower of present woes and  
past,

On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd  
by shame,  
And annals graved in characters of  
flame.

Oh, God ! that thou wert in thy naked-  
ness

Less lovely or more powerful, and  
couldst claim

Thy right, and awe the robbers back,  
who press

To shed thy blood, and drink the tears  
of thy distress ;

Then might'st thou more appal ; or, less  
desired,

Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord  
For thy destructive charms ; then, still  
untired,

Would not be seen the armed torrents  
pour'd

Down the deep Alps ; nor would the  
hostile horde

Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po  
Quaff blood and water ; nor the stranger's  
sword

Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,  
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of  
friend or foe.

Yet, Italy ! through every other  
land [St. 47

Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from  
side to side ;

Mother of Arts ! as once of arms ; thy  
hand

Was then our guardian, and is still our  
guide ;

Parent of our religion ! whom the wide  
Nations have knelt to for the keys of  
heaven !

Europe, repentant of her parricide,  
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward  
driven,

Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be  
forgiven.

Oh Rome ! my country ! city of the  
soul [St. 78

The orphans of the heart must turn to  
thee, [trol

Lone mother of dead empires ! and con-

In their shut breast their petty misery.  
What are our woes and sufferance?  
Come and see

The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your  
way

O'er steps of broken thrones and tem-  
ples, Ye !

Whose agonies are evils of a day—  
A world is at our feet as fragile as our  
clay.

The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,  
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless  
woe ;

An empty urn within her wither'd  
hands,

Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago ;  
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now ;  
The very sepulchres lie tenantless

Of their heroic dwellers : dost thou flow,  
Old Tiber ! through a marble wilder-  
ness ?

Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle  
her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War,  
Flood, and Fire,

Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's  
pride ;

She saw her glories star by star expire,  
And up the steep barbarian monarchs  
ride,

Where the car climb'd the Capitol ; far  
and wide

Temple and tower went down, nor left a  
site :

Chaos of ruins ! who shall trace the void,  
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar  
light.

And say, " here was, or is," where all is  
doubly night ?

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,  
And Freedom find no champion and no  
child

Such as Columbia saw arise when she  
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and un-  
defiled ?

Or must such minds be nourish'd in the  
wild,

Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the  
roar

Of cataracts, where nursing Nature  
smiled

On infant Washington ? Has Earth no  
more

Such seeds within her breast, or Europe  
no such shore ?

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high  
place [St. 112]  
Where Rome embraced her heroes?  
where the steep  
Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,  
The promontory whence the Traitor's  
Leap  
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors  
heap  
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field  
below,  
A thousand years of silenced factions  
sleep—  
The Forum, where the immortal accents  
glow,  
And still the eloquent air breathes—  
burns with Cicero!

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,  
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,  
Would build up all her triumphs in one  
dome,  
Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams  
shine  
As 'twere its natural torches, for divine  
Should be the light which streams here  
to illumine  
This long-explored but still exhaustless  
mine  
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom  
Of an Italian night, where the deepskies  
assume  
Hues which have words, and speak to ye  
of heaven,  
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous  
monument,  
And shadows forth its glory. There is  
given  
Unto the things of earth, which Time  
hath bent,  
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath  
leant  
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is  
a power  
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,  
For which the palace of the present hour  
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages  
are its dower.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,  
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd ap-  
plause,  
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-  
man.  
And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore,  
but because  
Such were the bloody Circus' genial  
laws,

And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore  
not?  
What matters where we fall to fill the  
maws  
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed  
spot?  
Both are but theatres where the chief  
actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie [St. 140]  
He leans upon his hand—his manly  
brow  
Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
And his droop'd head sinks gradually  
low—  
And through his side the last drops,  
ebbing slow  
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by  
one,  
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and  
now  
The arena swims around him—he is  
gone,  
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which  
hall'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
Were with his heart, and that was far  
away;  
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
But where his rude hut by the Danube  
lay,  
There were his young barbarians all at  
play,  
There was their Dacian mother—he,  
their sire,  
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he  
expire  
And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and  
glut your ire!

But here, where Murder breathed her  
bloody steam;  
And here, where buzzing nations choked  
the ways,  
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain  
stream  
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;  
Here, where the Roman million's blame  
or praise  
Was death or life, the playthings of a  
crowd,  
My voice sounds much—and fall the  
stars' faint rays  
On the arena void—seats crush'd, walls  
bow'd—  
And galleries, where my steps seem  
echoes strangely loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass  
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been  
rear'd ;

Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,  
And marvel where the spoil could have  
appear'd.

Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but  
clear'd ?

Alas! developed, opens the decay,  
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd :  
It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
Which streams too much on all years,  
man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to  
climb

Its topmost arch, and gently pauses  
there ;

When the stars twinkle through the  
loops of time,

And the low night-breeze waves along  
the air

The garland-forest, which the gray walls  
wear,

Like laurels on the bald first Caesar's  
head :

When the light shines serene but doth  
not glare,

Then in this magic circle raise the dead :  
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their  
dust ye tread.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,  
The being who upheld it through the  
past ? [St. 164]

Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.  
He is no more—these breathings are his  
last :

His wanderings done, his visions ebbing  
fast

And he himself as nothing :—if he was  
Aught but a phantasy, and could be  
class'd

With forms which live and suffer—let  
that pass —

His shadow fades away into Destruc-  
tion's mass.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life,  
and all

That we inherit in its mortal shroud,  
And spreads the firm and universal pull  
Through which all things grow phan-  
toms : and the cloud

Between us sinks, and all which ever  
glow'd

Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays  
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd  
To hover on the verge of darkness : rays

Sadder than saddest night, for they dis-  
tract the gaze,

And send us prying into the abyss,  
To gather what we shall be when the  
frame

Shall be resolved to something less than  
this

Its wretched essence ; and to dream of  
fame.

And wipe the dust from off the idle name  
We never more shall hear,—but never  
more,

Oh, happier thought! can we be made  
the same :

It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore  
These fardels of the heart—the heart  
whose sweat was gore.

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,  
And he and I must part,—so let it be—  
His task and mine alike are nearly done ;  
Yet once more let us look upon the sea ;  
The midland ocean breaks on him and  
me :

And from the Alban Mount we now be-  
hold

Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which  
when we

Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold  
Those waves, we follow'd on till the  
dark Euxine roll'd

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—  
Long, though not very many—since  
have done [St. 176]

Their work on both : some suffering  
and some tears

Have left us nearly where we had begun :  
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run :

We have had our reward, and it is here.—  
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,

And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as  
dear

As if there were no man to trouble what  
is clear.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-  
place.

With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
That I might all forget the human race.

And, hating no one, love but *only her!*  
Ye elements!—in whose ennobling stir

I feel myself exalted—Can ye not  
Accord me such a being! Do I err

In deeming such inhabit many a spot?  
Though with them to converse can rarely  
be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
 There is society, where none intrudes,  
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:  
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
 From these our interviews, in which I  
 steal  
 From all I may be, or have been before,  
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot  
 all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean  
 —roll!

Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in  
 vain;

Man marks the earth with ruin—his  
 control

Stops with the shore; upon the watery  
 plain

The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth  
 remain

A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,

He sinks into thy depths with bubbling  
 groan,

Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd,  
 and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy  
 fields

Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise  
 And shake him from thee; the vile

strength he wields  
 For earth's destruction thou dost all de-

spise,  
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the

skies,  
 And send'st him, shivering in thy play-

ful spray  
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply

lies  
 His petty home in some near port or bay

And dashest him again to earth:—there  
 let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the  
 walls,

Of rock-built cities, bidding nations  
 quake,

And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs

make  
 Their clay creator the vain title take

Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—  
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy

flake,  
 They melt into thy yeast of waves,

which mar

Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of  
 Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all  
 save thee—

Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what  
 are they?

Thy waters wash'd them power while  
 they were free,

And many a tyrant since; their shores  
 obey

The stranger, slave, or savage; their de-  
 cay

Has dried up realms to deserts: not so  
 thou:—

Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves'  
 play,

Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure  
 brow:

Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou  
 rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Al-  
 mighty's form

Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,—  
 Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale,

or storm,  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime

Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and  
 sublime,

The image of eternity, the throne  
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime

The monsters of the deep are made;  
 each zone

Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread,  
 fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my  
 joy

Of youthful sports was on thy breast to  
 be

Borne, like thy bubbles, onward; from  
 a boy

I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to  
 me

Were a delight; and if the freshearing sea  
 Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing

fear,  
 For I was as it were a child of thee,

And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I

do here.

My task is done, my song hath ceased,  
 my theme

Has died into an echo; it is fit  
 The spell should break of this protracted

dream.

The torch shall be extinguish'd which  
hath lit  
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is  
writ;  
Would it were worthier! but I am not  
now  
That which I have been—and my visions  
fit  
Less palpably before me—and the glow  
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering,  
faint, and low.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath  
been—  
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—  
farewell!  
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the  
scene  
Which is his last, if in your memories  
dwell  
A thought which once was his, if on ye  
swell  
A single recollection, not in vain  
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-  
shell;  
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the  
pain,  
If such there were—with *you*, the moral  
of his strain.

*June 26—July 20, 1817. 1818.*

### DON JUAN

#### DEDICATION

BOB SOUTHEY! You're a poet—Poet-  
laureate.  
And representative of all the race;  
Although 't is true that you turn'd out a  
Tory at  
Last,—yours has lately been a com-  
mon case;  
And now, my Epic Renegade! what are  
ye at?  
With all the Lakers, in and out of  
place?  
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye  
Like "four and twenty Blackbirds in a  
pye;  
"Which pye being open'd they began to  
sing."  
(This old song and new simile holds  
good).  
"A dainty dish to set before the King."  
Or Regent, who admires such kind of  
food;—  
And Coleridge, too, has lately taken  
wing,

But like a hawk encumber'd with his  
hood,—  
Explaining metaphysics to the nation—  
I wish he would explain his *Explanation*.

You, Bob! are rather insolent, you  
know,  
At being disappointed in your wish  
To supersede all warblers here below.  
And be the only Blackbird in the dish;  
And then you overstrain yourself, or so.  
And tumble downward like the flying  
fish  
Gasping on deck, because you soar too  
high, Bob,  
And fall for lack of moisture quite  
a-dry, Bob!

And Wordsworth, in a rather long "*Ex-  
cursion*"  
(I think the quarto holds five hundred  
pages),  
Has given a sample from the vasty ver-  
sion  
Of his new system to perplex the  
sages;  
'T is poetry—at least by his assertion,  
And may appear so when the dog-star  
rages—  
And he who understands it would be able  
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

You—Gentlemen! by dint of long seclu-  
sion  
From better company, have kept your  
own  
At Keswick, and through still continued  
fusion  
Of one another's minds, at last have  
grown  
To deem as a most logical conclusion,  
That poesy has wreaths for you alone:  
There is a narrowness in such a notion.  
Which makes me wish you'd change  
your lakes for ocean.

I would not imitate the petty thought,  
Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice.  
For all the glory your conversion  
brought.  
Since gold alone should not have been  
its price,  
You have your salary; was 't for that  
you wrought?  
And Wordsworth has his place in the  
Excise.  
You're shabby fellows—true—but poets  
still,  
And duly seated on the immortal hill.



Your bays may hide the baldness of your brows—

Perhaps some virtuous blushes;—let them go—

To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs—  
And for the fame you would engross below,

The field is universal, and allows  
Scope to all such as feel the inherent glow;

Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore and Crabbe will try

Gainst you the question with posterity.

For me, who, wandering with pedestrian Muses,

Contend not with you on the winged steed,

I wish your fate may yield ye, when she chooses,

The fame you envy, and the skill you need;

And recollect a poet nothing loses

In giving to his brethren their full meed

Of merit, and complaint of present days  
Is not the certain path to future praise.

He that reserves his laurels for posterity  
(Who does not often claim the bright reversion)

Has generally no great crop to spare it,  
he

Being only injured by his own assertion;

And although here and there some glorious rarity

Arise like Titan from the sea's immersion,

The major part of such appellants go  
To—God knows where—for no one else can know.

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues,  
Milton appealed to the Avenger, Time,

If Time, the Avenger, execrates his wrongs,

And makes the word "Miltonic" mean  
"sublime,"

He deign'd not to belie his soul in songs,  
Nor turn his very talent to a crime;

He did not loathe the Sire to laud the Son,

But closed the tyrant-hater he begun.

Think'st thou, could he—the blind Old Man,—arise,

Like Samuel from the grave, to freeze  
once more

The blood of monarchs with his prophecies.

Or be alive again—again all hoar  
With time and trials, and those helpless eyes,

And heartless daughters—worn—and pale—and poor;

Would *he* adore a sultan? *he* obey  
The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh?

Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant!

Dabbling its sleek young hands in Erin's gore

And thus for wider carnage taught to pant,

Transferr'd to gorge upon a sister shore,

The vulgarest tool that Tyranny could want,

With just enough of talent, and no more,

To lengthen fetters by another fix'd,  
And offer poison long already mix'd.

An orator of such set trash of phrase  
Ineffably—legitimately vile,

That even its grossest flatterers dare not praise,

Nor foes—all nations—condescend to smile;

Not even a sprightly blunder's spark can blaze

From that Ixion grindstone's ceaseless toil,

That turns and turns to give the world a notion

Of endless torments and perpetual motion.

A bungler even in its disgusting trade,  
And botching, patching, leaving still behind

Something of which its masters are afraid,

States to be curb'd, and thoughts to be confined,

Conspiracy or Congress to be made—  
Cobbling at manacles for all mankind—

A tinkering slave-maker, who mends old chains,

With God and man's abhorrence for its gains.

If we may judge of matter by the mind,  
Emasculated to the marrow *It*

Hath but two objects, how to serve, and bind,

Deeming the chain it wears even men  
may fit,  
Eutropius of its many masters—blind  
To worth as freedom, wisdom as to wit,  
Fearless—because no feeling dwells in  
ice,  
Its very courage stagnates to a vice.

Where shall I turn me not to *view* its  
bonds,  
For I will never *feel* them ;—Italy !  
Thy late reviving Roman soul desponds  
Beneath the lie this State-thing  
breathed o'er thee—  
Thy clanking chain, and Erin's yet green  
wounds,

Have voices—tongues to cry aloud for  
me.  
Europe has slaves, allies, kings, armies  
still,  
And Southey lives to sing them very ill.

Meantime, Sir Laureate, I proceed to ded-  
icate,  
In honest simple verse, this song to  
you.

And, if in flattering strains I do not pred-  
icate,

'T is that I still retain my "buff and  
blue ;"

My politics as yet are all to educate :

Apostasy's so fashionable, too,

To keep one creed's a task grown quite  
Herculean :

Is it not so, my Tory. Ultra-Julian ?  
*September, 1818. July 15, 1819.*

#### FROM CANTO I

##### POETICAL COMMANDMENTS

If ever I should condescend to prose,  
I'll write poetical commandments,  
which [St. 204]

Shall supersede beyond all doubt all  
those

That went before ; in these I shall en-  
rich

My text with many things that no one  
knows,

And carry precept to the highest pitch :  
I'll call the work "Longinus o'er a Bottle.  
Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle."

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden,  
Pope :

Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth,  
Coleridge, Southey :

Because the first is crazed beyond all  
hope,

The second drunk, the third so quaint  
and mouthy :

With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,  
And Campbell's Hippocrene is some-  
what drouthy :

Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers,  
nor

Commit—flirtation with the muse of  
Moore.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's  
Muse,

His Pegasus, nor anything that's his ;  
Thou shalt not bear false witness like  
"the Blues"—

(There's one, at least, is very fond of  
this) ;

Thou shalt not write, in short, but what  
I choose ;

This is true criticism, and you may  
kiss—

Exactly as you please, or not—the rod :  
But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d !

##### LABUNTUR ANNI

"*Non ego hoc ferrem calidus juvenis*

*Consule Planco*," Horace said, and so  
Say I ; by which quotation there is  
meant a [St. 212]

Hint that some six or seven good years  
ago

(Long ere I dreamt of dating from the  
Brenta)

I was most ready to return a blow,  
And would not brook at all this sort of  
thing

In my hot youth—when George the  
Third was King.

But now at thirty years my hair is gray—  
(I wonder what it will be like at forty ?

I thought of a peruke the other day—)  
My heart is not much greener ; and, in  
short, I

Have squander'd my whole summer  
while 't was May.

And feel no more the spirit to retort ; I  
Have spent my life, both interest and  
principal.

And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul  
invincible.

No more—no more—Oh ! never more on  
me

The freshness of the heart can fall like  
dew.

Which out of all the lovely things we see  
Extracts emotions beautiful and new.

ived in our bosoms like the bag o' the  
bee.

Think'st thou the honey with those ob-  
jects grew?

las ! 't was not in them, but in thy power  
o double even the sweetness of a flower.

o more—no more—Oh ! never more, my  
heart,  
Canst thou be my sole world, my uni-  
verse !

nce all in all, but now a thing apart,  
Thou canst not be my blessing or my  
curse :

he illusion's gone for ever, and thou art  
Insensible, I trust, but none the worse,  
nd in thy stead I've got a deal of  
judgment,  
hough heaven knows how it ever found  
a lodgment.

y days of love are over ; me no more  
The charms of maid, wife, and still less  
of widow,  
an make the fool of which they made  
before,—

In short, I must not lead the life I did  
do :

ne credulous hope of mutual minds is  
o'er,

The copious use of claret is forbid too,  
for a good old-gentlemanly vice,  
think I must take up with avarice.

mbition was my idol, which was broken  
Before the shrines of Sorrow, and of  
Pleasure :

nd the two last have left me many a  
token

O'er which reflection may be made at  
leisure ;

ow, like Friar Bacon's brazen head,  
I've spoken,

“ Time is, Time was, Time's past : ”—a  
chymic treasure

s glittering youth, which I have spent  
betimes—

fy heart in passion, and my head on  
rhymes.

What is the end of fame? 't is but to fill

A certain portion of uncertain paper :  
Some liken it to climbing up a hill

Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in  
vapor ;

For this men write, speak, preach, and  
heroes kill,

And bards burn what they call their  
“ midnight taper,”

To have, when the original is dust,

A name, a wretched picture, and worse  
bust.

Canto I. *September, 1818.* July 15, 1819.

## FROM CANTO II

### THE SHIPWRECK

Tw'as twilight, and the sunless day  
went down [St. 49.

Over the waste of waters ; like a veil.  
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose  
the frown

Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail.  
Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was  
shown,

And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,  
And the dim desolate deep : twelve days  
had Fear

Been their familiar, and now Death was  
here.

Some trial had been making at a raft,  
With little hope in such a rolling sea,  
A sort of thing at which one would have  
laugh'd,

If any laughter at such times could be,  
Unless with people who too much have  
quaff'd,

And have a kind of wild and horrid  
glee,

Half epileptical, and half hysterical :—  
Their preservation would have been a  
miracle.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hen-  
coops, spars,

And all things, for a chance, had been  
cast loose

That still could keep afloat the struggling  
tars,

For yet they strove, although of no  
great use :

There was no light in heaven but a few  
stars,

The boats put off o'er-crowded with  
their crews ;

She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,  
And, going down head-foremost—sunk,  
in short.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild fare-  
well—

Then shriek'd the timid, and stood  
still the brave—

Then some leap'd overboard with dread-  
ful yell.

As eager to anticipate their grave ;  
And the sea yawn'd around her like a  
hell,



And down she suck'd with her the  
whirling wave,  
Like one who grapples with his enemy,  
And strives to strangle him before he die.

And first one universal shriek there  
rush'd.

Louder than the loud ocean, like a  
crash  
Of echoing thunder; and then all was  
hush'd,

Save the wild wind and the remorse-  
less dash  
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,  
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

#### HAIDEE

How long in his damp trance young  
Juan lay [St. 111.

He knew not, for the earth was gone  
for him.

And time had nothing more of night  
nor day

For his congealing blood, and senses  
dim;

And how this heavy faintness pass'd  
away

He knew not, till each painful pulse  
and limb,

And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing  
back to life,

For Death, though vanquish'd, still re-  
tired with strife.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,  
For all was doubt and dizziness; he  
thought

He still was in the boat, and had but  
dozed,

And felt again with his despair o'er-  
wrought,

And wish'd it death in which he had  
reposed.

And then once more his feelings back  
were brought.

And slowly by his swimming eyes was  
seen

A lovely female face of seventeen.

'Twas bending close o'er his, and the  
small mouth

Seem'd almost prying into his for  
breath:

And chafing him, the soft warm hand  
of youth

Recall'd his answering spirits back  
from death;

And, bathing his chill temples, tried to  
soothe

Each pulse to animation, till beneath  
Its gentle touch and trembling care, a  
sigh

To these kind efforts made a low reply.

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle  
flung

Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the  
fair arm

Raised higher the faint head which o'er  
it hung;

And her transparent cheek, all pure  
and warm,

Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then  
she wrung

His dewy curls, long drench'd by  
every storm;

And watch'd with eagerness each throb  
that drew

A sigh from his heaved bosom—and  
hers, too.

And lifting him with care into the cave,  
The gentle girl, and her attendant,—  
one

Young, yet her elder, and of brow less  
grave,

And more robust of figure—then begun  
To kindle fire, and as the new flames  
gave

Light to the rocks that roof'd them,  
which the sun

Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoe'er  
She was, appear'd distinct, and tall,  
and fair.

Her brow was overhung with coins of  
gold,

That sparkled o'er the auburn of her  
hair,

Her clustering hair, whose longer locks  
were roll'd

In braids behind; and though her  
stature were

Even of the highest for a female mould,  
They nearly reach'd her heel; and in  
her air

There was a something which bespoke  
command,

As one who was a lady in the land.

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her  
eyes

Were black as death, their lashes the  
same hue,

Of downcast length, in whose silk  
shadow lies  
Deepest attraction; for when to the  
view  
Forth from its raven fringe the full  
glance flies,  
Ne'er with such force the swiftest  
arrow flew;  
'Tis as the snake late coil'd, who pours  
his length,  
And hurls at once his venom and his  
strength.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's  
pure dye  
Like twilight rosy still with the set  
sun;  
Short upper lip—sweet lips! that make  
us sigh  
Ever to have seen such; for she was  
one  
Fit for the model of a statuary  
(A race of mere impostors, when all's  
done—  
I've seen much finer women, ripe and  
real,  
Than all the nonsense of their stone  
ideal).

I'll tell you why I say so, for 't is just  
One should not rail without a decent  
cause:  
There was an Irish lady, to whose bust  
I ne'er saw justice done, and yet she  
was  
A frequent model; and if e'er she must  
Yield to stern Time and Nature's  
wrinkling laws,  
They will destroy a face which mortal  
thought  
Ne'er compass'd, nor less mortal chisel  
wrought.

And such was she, the lady of the cave:  
Her dress was very different from the  
Spanish,  
Simpler, and yet of colors not so grave;  
For, as you know, the Spanish women  
banish  
Bright hues when out of doors, and yet,  
while wave  
Around them (what I hope will never  
vanish)  
The *basquina* and the mantilla, they  
Seem at the same time mystical and gay.  
But with our damsel this was not the  
case:  
Her dress was many-color'd, finely  
spun;

Her locks curl'd negligently round her  
face,  
But through them gold and gems pro-  
fusely shone:  
Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace  
Flow'd in her veil, and many a precious  
stone  
Flash'd on her little hand; but, what  
was shocking,  
Her small snow feet had slippers, but no  
stocking.

The other female's dress was not unlike,  
But of inferior materials: she  
Had not so many ornaments to strike,  
Her hair had silver only, bound to be  
Her dowry; and her veil, in form alike,  
Was coarser; and her air, though  
firm, less free;  
Her hair was thicker, but less long; her  
eyes  
As black, but quicker, and of smaller  
size.

And these two tended him, and cheer'd  
him both  
With food and raiment, and those soft  
attentions,  
Which are—(as I must own)—of female  
growth,  
And have ten thousand delicate inven-  
tions:  
They made a most superior mess of broth,  
A thing which poesy but seldom men-  
tions,  
But the best dish that e'er was cook'd  
since Homer's  
Achilles order'd dinner for new comers.

The coast—I think it was the coast that I  
Was just describing—Yes, it *was* the  
coast— [St. 181  
Lay at this period quiet as the sky,  
The sands untumbled, the blue waves  
untost,  
And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's  
cry.  
And dolphin's leap, and little billow  
crost  
By some low rock or shelve, that made  
it fret  
Against the boundary it scarcely wet.

And forth they wander'd, her sire being  
gone,  
As I have said, upon an expedition;  
And mother, brother, guardian, she had  
none,  
Save Zoe, who, although with due pre-  
cision

She waited on her lady with the sun,  
 Thought daily service was her only  
 mission,  
 Bringing warm water, wreathing her  
 long tresses,  
 And asking now and then for cast-off  
 dresses.

It was the cooling hour, just when the  
 rounded  
 Red sun sinks down behind the azure  
 hill,  
 Which then seems as if the whole earth  
 it bounded,  
 Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim,  
 and still,  
 With the far mountain-crescent half  
 surrounded  
 On one side, and the deep sea calm  
 and chill,  
 Upon the other, and the rosy sky.  
 With one star sparkling through it like  
 an eye.

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand  
 in hand,  
 Over the shining pebbles and the shells,  
 Glided along the smooth and harden'd  
 sand,  
 And in the worn and wild receptacles  
 Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as if  
 were plann'd,  
 In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and  
 cells,  
 They turn'd to rest; and, each clasp'd  
 by an arm,  
 Yielded to the deep twilight's purple  
 charm.

They look'd up to the sky, whose float-  
 ing glow  
 Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and  
 bright;  
 They gazed upon the glittering sea be-  
 low.  
 Whence the broad moon rose circling  
 into sight;  
 They heard the waves splash, and the  
 wind so low.  
 And saw each other's dark eyes darting  
 light  
 Into each other—and, beholding this,  
 Their lips drew near, and clung into a  
 kiss;

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and  
 love,  
 And beauty, all concentrating like rays  
 Into one focus, kindled from above;

Such kisses as belong to early days,  
 Where heart, and soul, and sense, in  
 concert move,  
 And the blood's lava, and the pulse a  
 blaze,  
 Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss  
 strength,  
 I think it must be reckon'd by its length.

By length I mean duration; theirs en-  
 dured  
 Heaven knows how long—no doubt  
 they never reckon'd;  
 And if they had, they could not have  
 secured  
 The sum of their sensations to a second;  
 They had not spoken; but they felt al-  
 lured,  
 As if their souls and lips each other  
 beckon'd.  
 Which, being join'd, like swarming bees  
 they clung—  
 Their hearts the flowers from whence  
 the honey sprung.

They were alone, but not alone as they  
 Who shut in chambers think it lone-  
 liness;  
 The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,  
 The twilight glow, which momentarily  
 grew less,  
 The voiceless sands, and dropping caves,  
 that lay  
 Around them, made them to each other  
 press.  
 As if there were no life beneath the sky  
 Save theirs, and that their life could  
 never die.

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone  
 beach,  
 They felt no terrors from the night:  
 they were  
 All in all to each other; though their  
 speech  
 Was broken words, they *thought* a  
 language there,—  
 And all the burning tongues the passions  
 teach  
 Found in one sigh the best interpreter  
 Of nature's oracle—first love,—that all  
 Which Eve has left her daughters since  
 her fall.

Alas! the love of women! it is known  
 To be a lovely and a fearful thing;  
 For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,  
 And if 't is lost, life hath no more to  
 bring

To them but mockeries of the past alone,  
And their revenge is as the tiger's  
spring,  
Deadly, and quick, and crushing; yet,  
as real  
Torture is theirs, what they inflict they  
feel.

They are right; for man, to man so oft  
unjust,  
Is always so to women; one sole bond  
Awaits them, treachery is all their trust;  
Taught to conceal, their bursting  
hearts despond  
Over their idol, till some wealthier lust  
Buys them in marriage—and what  
rests beyond?  
A thankless husband, next a faithless  
lover,  
Then dressing, nursing, praying, and  
all's over.

Some take a lover, some take drams or  
prayers,  
Some mind their household, others  
dissipation,  
Some run away, and but exchange their  
cares,  
Losing the advantage of a virtuous  
station;  
Few changes e'er can better their affairs,  
Theirs being an unnatural situation,  
From the dull palace to the dirty hovel:  
Some play the devil, and then write a  
novel.

Haidée was Nature's bride, and knew  
not this:

Haidée was Passion's child, born  
where the sun

Showers triple light, and scorches even  
the kiss

Of his gazelle-eyed daughters; she was  
one

Made but to love, to feel that she was  
his

Who was her chosen: what was said or  
done

Elsewhere was nothing: She had nought  
to fear,

Hope, care, nor love beyond,—her heart  
beat *here*.

And oh! that quickening of the heart,  
that beat!

How much it costs us! yet each rising  
throb

Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,  
That wisdom, ever on the watch to rob  
Joy of its alchemy, and to repeat

Fine truths; even Conscience, too, has  
a tough job  
To make us understand each good old  
maxim,  
So good—I wonder Castlereagh don't tax  
'em.

And now 't was done—on the lone shore  
were plighted  
Their hearts; the stars, their nuptial  
torches, shed  
Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted;  
Ocean their witness, and the cave  
their bed,  
By their own feelings hallow'd and  
united,  
Their priest was Solitude, and they  
were wed:  
And they were happy, for to their young  
eyes  
Each was an angel, and earth paradise.

Oh, Love! of whom great Cæsar was the  
suitor,

Titus the master, Antony the slave,  
Horace, Catullus, scholars, Ovid tutor,  
Sappho the sage blue-stockings, in  
whose grave

All those may leap who rather would be  
neuter—

(Leucadia's rock still overlooks the  
wave)—

Oh, Love! thou art the very god of evil,  
For, after all, we cannot call thee devil.

Thou mak'st the chaste connubial state  
precarious,

And jestest with the brows of might-  
iest men:

Cæsar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,  
Have much employ'd the muse of his-  
tory's pen:

Their lives and fortunes were extremely  
various,

Such worthies Time will never see  
again;

Yet to these four in three things the  
same luck holds,

They all were heroes, conquerors, and  
cuckolds.

Thou mak'st philosophers; there's Epi-  
curus

And Aristippus, a material crew!  
Who to immoral courses would allure us

By theories quite practicable too;  
If only from the devil they would insure

us,  
How pleasant were the maxim (not  
quite new),

"Eat, drink, and love; what can the  
rest avail us?"  
So said the royal sage Sardanapalus.

But Juan! had he quite forgotten Julia?  
And should he have forgotten her so  
soon?

I can't but say it seems to me most  
truly a  
Perplexing question; but, no doubt,  
the moon

Does these things for us, and whenever  
newly a

Strong palpitation rises, 't is her boon,  
Else how the devil is it that fresh fea-  
tures

Have such a charm for us poor human  
creatures?

I hate inconstancy—I loathe, detest,  
Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal  
made  
Of such quicksilver clay that in his  
breast

No permanent foundation can be laid;  
Love, constant love, has been my con-  
stant guest,

And yet last night, being at a masque-  
rade,

I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from  
Milan,

Which gave me some sensations like a  
villain.

But soon Philosophy came to my aid,  
And whisper'd, "Think of every  
sacred tie!"

"I will, my dear Philosophy!" I said,  
"But then her teeth, and then, oh,  
Heaven! her eye!

I'll just inquire if she be wife or maid,  
Or neither—out of curiosity."

"Stop!" cried Philosophy, with air so  
Grecian

(Though she was masqued then as a fair  
Venetian);

"Stop!" so I stopp'd.—But to return:  
that which

Men call inconstancy is nothing more  
Than admiration due where nature's rich

Profusion with young beauty covers  
o'er

Some favor'd object; and as in the niche  
A lovely statue we almost adore,

This sort of adoration of the real  
Is but a heightening of the "beau  
ideal."

'T is the perception of the beautiful,  
A fine extension of the faculties,  
Platonic, universal, wonderful,  
Drawn from the stars, and filter'd  
through the skies,  
Without which life would be extremely  
dull:

In short, it is the use of our own eyes,  
With one or two small senses added, just  
To hint that flesh is form'd of fiery dust.

Yet 't is a painful feeling, and unwilling,  
For surely if we always could perceive  
In the same object graces quite as kill-  
ing

As when she rose upon us like an Eve,  
'T would save us many a heart-ache,  
many a shilling

(For we must get them anyhow, or  
grieve),

Whereas, if one sole lady pleased for-  
ever,  
How pleasant for the heart, as well as  
liver.

The heart is like the sky, a part of  
heaven,

But changes night and day, too, like  
the sky;

Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be  
driven,

And darkness and destruction as on  
high:

But when it hath been scorch'd, and  
pierced, and riven,

Its storms expire in water-drops; the  
eye

Pours forth at last the heart's blood  
turn'd to tears,

Which make the English climate of our  
years.

The liver is the lazaret of bile,  
But very rarely executes its function.

For the first passion stays there such a  
while,

That all the rest creep in and form a  
junction,

Like knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil.  
Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge,

compunction,  
So that all mischiefs spring up from this  
entail,

Like earthquakes from the hidden fire  
call'd "central."

In the mean time, without proceeding  
more

In this anatomy, I've finish'd now



Two hundred and odd stanzas as before,  
That being about the number I'll  
allow  
Each canto of the twelve, or twenty-  
four;  
And, laying down my pen, I make my  
bow,  
Leaving Don Juan and Haidée to plead  
For them and theirs with all who deign  
to read.

Canto II., *December, 1818, January,*  
*1819. July 15, 1819.*

### FROM CANTO III

#### THE ISLES OF GREECE

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !  
Where burning Sappho loved and  
sung,

Where grew the arts of war and peace,—  
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus  
sprung !

Eternal summer gilds them yet,  
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,  
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,  
Have found the fame your shores refuse:  
Their place of birth alone is mute  
To sounds which echo further west  
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon—  
And Marathon looks on the sea ;  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dream'd that Greece might still be  
free ;  
For standing on the Persians' grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow  
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis ;  
And ships, by thousands, lay below,  
And men in nations ;—all were his !  
He counted them at break of day—  
And when the sun set, where were they ?

And where are they ? and where art thou,  
My country ? On thy voiceless shore  
The heroic lay is tuneless now—  
The heroic bosom beats no more !  
And must thy lyre, so long divine,  
Degenerate into hands like mine ?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,  
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,  
To feel at least a patriot's shame,  
Even as I sing, suffuse my face ;  
For what is left the poet here ?  
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest ?  
Must *we* but blush ?—Our fathers' blood  
Earth ! render back from out thy breast  
A remnant of our Spartan dead !  
Of the three hundred grant but three,  
To make a new Thermopylæ !

What, silent still ? and silent all ?  
Ah ! no ;—the voices of the dead  
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,  
And answer, " Let one living head,  
But one arise,—we come, we come !"  
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain : strike other chords ;  
Fill high the cup with Samian wine !  
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,  
And shed the blood of Scio's vine !  
Hark ! rising to the ignoble call—  
How answers each bold Bacchanal !

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet ;  
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone ?  
Of two such lessons, why forget  
The nobler and the manlier one ?  
You have the letters Cadmus gave—  
Think ye he meant them for a slave ?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !  
We will not think of themes like these !  
It made Anacreon's song divine ;  
He served—but served Polycrates—  
A tyrant ; but our masters then  
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese  
Was freedom's best and bravest  
friend ;  
That tyrant was Miltiades !  
Oh ! that the present hour would lend  
Another despot of the kind !  
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !  
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,  
Exists the remnant of a line  
Such as the Doric mothers bore ;  
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,  
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks,  
They have a king who buys and sells ;  
In native swords and native ranks,  
The only hope of courage dwells ;  
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,  
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !  
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—  
I see their glorious black eyes shine ;  
But gazing on each glowing maid,

My own the burning tear-drop laves,  
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,  
Where nothing, save the waves and I,  
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;  
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:  
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—  
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should  
have sung, St. 87

The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;  
If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece  
was young,

Yet in these times he might have done  
much worse:

His strain display'd some feeling—right  
or wrong;

And feeling, in a poet, is the source  
Of others' feeling; but they are such  
liars,

And take all colors—like the hands of  
dyers.

But words are things, and a small drop  
of ink,

Falling like dew, upon a thought, pro-  
duces

That which makes thousands, perhaps  
millions, think;

'Tis strange, the shortest letter which  
man uses

Instead of speech, may form a lasting  
link

Of ages; to what straits old Time re-  
duces

Frail man when paper—even a rag like  
this,

Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's  
his!

And when his bones are dust, his grave  
a blank,

His station, generation, even his na-  
tion,

Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank  
In chronological commemoration.

Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,  
Or graven stone found in a barrack's  
station

In digging the foundation of a closet,  
May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

And glory long has made the sages smile;  
'Tis something, nothing, words, il-  
lusion wind—

Depending more upon the historian's  
style

Than on the name a person leaves  
behind:

Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to  
Hoyle;

The present century was growing blind  
To the great Marlborough's skill in giv-  
ing knocks,

Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

Milton's the prince of poets—so we say:  
A little heavy, but no less divine:

An independent being in his day—

Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and  
wine;

But his life falling into Johnson's way,  
We're told this great high priest of all  
the Nine

Was whipt at college—a harsh sire—  
odd spouse,

For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

All these are, *certainly*, entertaining facts,  
Like Shakspeare's stealing deer, Lord  
Bacon's bribes;

Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest  
acts;

Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well  
describes);

Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although  
truth exacts

These amiable descriptions from the  
scribes,

As most essential to their hero's story,  
They do not much contribute to his glory.

All are not moralists, like Southey, when  
He prated to the world of "Pantis-  
ocracy:"

Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who  
then

Season'd his pedlar poems with de-  
mocracy;

Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen  
Let to the Morning Post its aris-  
tocracy;

When he and Southey, following the  
same path,

Espoused two partners (milliners of  
Bath).

Such names at present cut a convict  
figure,

The very Botany Bay in moral geo-  
graphy;

Their royal treason, renegade rigor,  
Are good manure for their more bare  
biography.

Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way,  
is bigger

Than any since the birthday of typography;  
A drowsy frowzy poem, call'd the "Excursion,"  
Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

He there builds up a formidable dyke  
Between his own and others' intellect;  
But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers, like  
Joanna Southcote's Shiloh, and her sect,  
Are things which in this century don't strike  
The public mind,—so few are the elect;  
And the new births of both their stale virginities  
Have proved but dropsies, taken for divinities.

But let me to my story: I must own,  
If I have any fault, it is digression,  
Leaving my people to proceed alone,  
While I soliloquize beyond expression:  
But these are my addresses from the throne,  
Which put off business to the ensuing session:  
Forgetting each omission is a loss to  
The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

I know that what our neighbors call  
"longueurs,"  
(We 've not so good a word, but have the thing,  
In that complete perfection which insures  
An epic from Bob Southey every Spring—)  
Form not the true temptation which allures  
The reader; but 't would not be hard to bring  
Some fine examples of the *épopée*.  
To prove its grand ingredient is ennui.

We learn from Horace, "Homer sometimes sleeps;"  
We feel without him, Wordsworth sometimes wakes,—  
To show with what complacency he creeps,  
With his dear "Wagoners," around his lakes.  
He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps—  
Of ocean?—No, of air; and then he makes

Another outcry for "a little boat,"  
And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,  
And Pegasus runs restive in his "Wagon,"  
Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain?  
Or pray Medea for a single dragon?  
Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,  
He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag on,  
And he must needs mount nearer to the moon.  
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

"Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Wagons!" Oh! ye shades  
Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?  
That trash of such sort not alone evades  
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss  
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades  
Of sense and song above your graves may hiss—  
The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"  
Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel!"

T' our tale.—The feast was over, the slaves gone,  
The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired:  
The Arab lore and poet's song were done,  
And every sound of revelry expired;  
The lady and her lover, left alone,  
The rosy flood of twilight's sky admired;  
Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,  
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!  
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft  
Have felt that moment in its fullest power  
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,  
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,  
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,



And not a breath crept through the rosy  
air,  
And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd  
with prayer.

Ave Maria ! 't is the hour of prayer !  
Ave Maria ! 't is the hour of love !  
Ave Maria ! may our spirits dare  
Look up to thine and to thy Son's  
above !  
Ave Maria ! oh that face so fair !  
Those downcast eyes beneath the Al-  
mighty dove—  
What though 't is but a pictured image  
strike,  
That painting is no idol,—'t is too like.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,  
In nameless print—that I have no de-  
votion ;  
But set those persons down with me to  
pray,  
And you shall see who has the proper-  
est notion  
Of getting into heaven the shortest way ;  
My altars are the mountains and the  
ocean,  
Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from  
the great Whole,  
Who hath produced, and will receive  
the soul.

Sweet hour of twilight !—in the solitude  
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore  
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial  
wood,  
Rooted where once the Adrian wave  
flow'd o'er,  
To where the last Caesarean fortress  
stood,  
Evergreen forest ! which Boccaccio's  
lore  
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground  
to me,  
How have I loved the twilight hour and  
thee !

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,  
Making their summer lives one cease-  
less song,  
Were the sole echoes, save my steed's  
and mine,  
And vesper bell's that rose the boughs  
along ;  
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line.  
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the  
fair throng  
Which learn'd from this example not to  
fly

From a true lover,—shadow'd my mind's  
eye.

Oh, Hesperus ! thou bringest all good  
things—

Home to the weary, to the hungry  
cheer,  
To the young bird the parent's brooding  
wings,  
The welcome stall to the o'erlabor'd  
steer ;  
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone  
clings,  
Whate'er our household gods protect  
of dear,  
Are gather'd round us by thy look of  
rest ;  
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the  
mother's breast.

Soft hour ! which wakes the wish and  
melts the heart  
Of those who sail the seas, on the first  
day  
When they from their sweet friends are  
torn apart ;  
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his  
way  
As the far bell of vesper makes him start.  
Seeming to weep the dying day's  
decay ;  
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns ?  
Ah ! surely nothing dies but something  
mourns !

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom  
Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,  
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,  
Of nations freed, and the world over-  
joy'd,  
Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon  
his tomb :  
Perhaps the weakness of a heart not  
void  
Of feeling for some kindness done, when  
power  
Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

But I'm digressing ; what on earth has  
Nero,  
Or any such like sovereign buffoons,  
To do with the transactions of my hero,  
More than such madmen's fellow-man  
—the moon's ?  
Sure my invention must be down at zero,  
And I grown one of many " wooden  
spoons "  
Of verse (the name with which we Can-  
tats please  
To dub the last of honors in degrees).

I feel this tediousness will never do—  
 'Tis being *too* epic, and I must cut down  
 (In copying) this long canto into two ;  
 They'll never find it out, unless I own  
 The fact, excepting some experienced  
 few ;  
 And then as an improvement 't will be  
 shown :  
 I'll prove that such the opinion of the  
 critic is  
 From Aristotle *passim*.—See *Ποιητικῆς*.  
 Canto III. 1819–1820. August 8, 1821.

## FROM CANTO IV

NOTHING so difficult as a beginning [St. 1  
 In poesy, unless perhaps the end ;  
 For oftentimes when Pegasus seems  
 winning  
 The race, he sprains a wing, and down  
 we tend,  
 Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven  
 for sinning ;  
 Our sin the same, and hard as his to  
 mend,  
 Being pride, which leads the mind to soar  
 too far,  
 Till our own weakness shows us what we  
 are.

But time, which brings all beings to their  
 level,  
 And sharp Adversity, will teach at last  
 Man,—and, as we would hope,—perhaps  
 the devil,  
 That neither of their intellects are vast :  
 While youth's hot wishes in our red veins  
 revel,  
 We know not this—the blood flows on  
 too fast :  
 But as the torrent widens towards the  
 ocean,  
 We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,  
 And wish'd that others held the same  
 opinion ;  
 They took it up when my days grew more  
 mellow,  
 And other minds acknowledged my  
 dominion :  
 Now my sere fancy "falls into the yellow  
 Leaf," and Imagination droops her  
 pinion,  
 And the sad truth which hovers o'er my  
 desk  
 Turns what was once romantic to bur-  
 lesque.

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,  
 'Tis that I may not weep ; and if I  
 weep,  
 'Tis that our nature cannot always bring  
 Itself to apathy, for we must steep  
 Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's  
 spring,  
 Ere what we least wish to behold will  
 sleep :  
 Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx :  
 A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

Some have accused me of a strange design  
 Against the creed and morals of the  
 land,  
 And trace it in this poem every line ;  
 I don't pretend that I quite understand  
 My own meaning when I would be *very*  
 fine ;  
 But the fact is that I have nothing  
 plann'd,  
 Unless it were to be a moment merry,  
 A novel word in my vocabulary.

To the kind reader of our sober clime  
 This way of writing will appear exotic ;  
 Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,  
 Who sang when chivalry was more  
 Quixotic,  
 And revell'd in the fancies of the time,  
 True knights, chaste dames, huge giant  
 kings despotic :  
 But all these, save the last, being obsolete,  
 I chose a modern subject as more meet.

How I have treated it, I do not know ;  
 Perhaps no better than they have  
 treated me,  
 Who have imputed such designs as show  
 Not what they saw, but what they  
 wish'd to see ;  
 But if it gives them pleasure, be it so,  
 This is a liberal age, and thoughts are  
 free :  
 Meantime Apollo plucks me by the ear,  
 And tells me to resume my story here.  
 Canto IV. 1819–1820. August 8, 1821.

## FROM CANTO XI

## LONDON LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

JUAN knew several languages—as well  
 He might—and brought them up with  
 skill, in time [St. 53  
 To save his fame with each accomplish'd  
 belle.  
 Who still regretted that he did not  
 rhyme.

There wanted but this requisite to swell  
His qualities (with them) into sublime  
Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Man-  
nish,  
Both long'd extremely to be sung in  
Spanish.

However, he did pretty well, and was  
Admitted as an aspirant to all  
The coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,  
At great assemblies or in parties small,  
He saw ten thousand living authors pass,  
That being about their average num-  
eral;

Also the eighty "greatest living poets,"  
As every paltry magazine can show it's.

In twice five years the "greatest living  
poet."

Like to the champion fisty in the ring,  
Is call'd on to support his claim, or show  
it,

Although 't is an imaginary thing.  
Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,  
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be  
king,—

Was reckon'd a considerable time.  
The grand Napoleon of the realms of  
rhyme.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero  
My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean  
seems Cain :

"La Belle Alliance" of dunces down at  
zero,

Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise  
again :

But I will fall at least as fell my hero :  
Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign ;  
Or to some lonely isle of gaolers go,  
With turncoat Southey for my turnkey  
Lowe.

Sir Walter reign'd before me ; Moore  
and Campbell

Before and after : but now grown more  
holy,

The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble  
With poets almost clergymen, or  
wholly :

And Pegasus has a psalmodic amble  
Beneath the very Reverend Rowley  
Powley,

Who shoes the glorious animal with  
stilts,

A modern Ancient Pistol—"by these  
hilts!"

Still he excels that artificial hard  
Laborer in the same vineyard, though  
the vine

Yields him but vinegar for his reward.—  
That neutralized dull Dorus of the  
Nine ;

That swarthy Sporus, neither man nor  
bard ;

That ox of verse, who *ploughs* for every  
line :—

Cambyses' roaring Romans beat at least  
The howling Hebrews of Cybele's  
priest.—

Then there's my gentle Euphues ; who,  
they say,

Sets up for being a sort of *moral me* :<sup>1</sup>

He 'll find it rather difficult some day

To turn out both, or either, it may be.  
Some persons think that Coleridge hath  
the sway ;

And Wordsworth has supporters, two  
or three ;

And that deep-mouth'd Boeotian "Sav-  
age Lander"

Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's  
gander.

John Keats, who was kill'd off by one  
critique,<sup>2</sup>

Just as he really promised something  
great,

If not intelligible, without Greek

Contrived to talk about the Gods of  
late,

Much as they might have been supposed  
to speak.

Poor fellow ! His was an untoward fate:

'T is strange the mind, that very fiery  
particle,

Should let itself be snuff'd out by an  
article.

The list grows long of live and dead pre-  
tenders

To that which none will gain—or none  
will know

The conqueror at least ; who, ere Time  
renders

His last award, will have the long grass  
grow

Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless  
cinders.

If I might augur, I should rate but low

<sup>1</sup> Barry Cornwall, once called "a moral Byron."

<sup>2</sup> The entirely mistaken idea that Keats' de-  
cline and death were due to the severe criticism  
on his *Endymion* in the *Quarterly Review*, was  
shared by Shelley, and was generally prevalent  
until the publication of Milnes' *Life of Keats*.  
See H. Buxton Forman's edition of *Keats*'  
*Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 223-272, and Colvin's *Life of*  
*Keats*, pp. 124 and 208.

Their chances;—they 're too numerous,  
like the thirty  
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd  
but dirty.

This is the literary *lower* empire,  
Where the prætorian bands take up  
the matter;—  
A "dreadful trade," like his who "ga-  
thers samphire,"  
The insolent soldiery to soothe and  
flatter,  
With the same feelings as you'd coax a  
vampire.  
Now, were I once at home, and in  
good satire,  
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries.  
And show them *what* an intellectual  
war is.

I think I know a trick or two, would  
turn  
Their flanks;—but it is hardly worth  
my while  
With such small gear to give myself  
concern:  
Indeed I 've not the necessary bile;  
My natural temper 's really aught but  
stern.  
And even my Muse's worst reproof 's a  
smile;  
And then she drops a brief and modern  
curtsy,  
And glides away, assured she never  
hurts ye.

My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril  
Amongst live poets and blue ladies,  
pass'd  
With some small profit through that  
field so sterile,  
Being tired in time, and neither least  
nor last,  
Left it before he had been treated very  
ill;  
And henceforth found himself more  
gaily class'd  
Amongst the higher spirits of the day.  
The sun's true son, no vapor, but a ray.

His morns he pass'd in business—which  
dissected,  
Was like all business, a laborious noth-  
ing  
That leads to lassitude, the most infected  
And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal  
clothing,  
And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,  
And talk in tender horrors of our  
loathing

All kinds of toil, save for our country's  
good—  
Which grows no better, though 't is time  
it should.

His afternoons he pass'd in visits, lunch-  
eons,  
Lounging, and boxing; and the twi-  
light hour  
In riding round those vegetable punch-  
eons  
Call'd "Parks," where there is neither  
fruit nor flower  
Enough to gratify a bee's slight munch-  
ings;  
But after all it is the only "bower"  
(In Moore's phrase) where the fashion-  
able fair  
Can form a slight acquaintance with  
fresh air.

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the  
world!  
Then glare the lamps, then whirl the  
wheels, then roar  
Through street and square fast flashing  
chariots hurl'd  
Like harness'd meteors; then along  
the floor  
Chalk mimics painting; then festoons  
are twirl'd;  
Then roll the brazen thunders of the  
door,  
Which opens to the thousand happy few  
An earthly Paradise of "Or Molu."

There stands the noble hostess, nor shall  
sink  
With the three-thousandth curtsy;  
there the waltz,  
The only dance which teaches girls to  
think,  
Makes one in love even with its very  
faults.  
Saloon, room, hall, o'erflow beyond their  
brink,  
And long the latest of arrivals halts,  
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemn'd  
to climb,  
And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

Thrice happy he who, after a survey  
Of the good company, can win a corner,  
A door that's *in* or boudoir *out* of the  
way,  
Where he may fix himself like small  
"Jack Horner,"  
And let the Babel round run as it may,  
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,

Or an approver, or a mere spectator,  
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

But this won't do, save by and by ; and he  
Who, like Don Juan, takes an active  
share,

Must steer with care through all that  
glittering sea

Of gems and plumes and pearls and  
silks, to where

He deems it is his proper place to be ;

Dissolving in the waltz to some soft  
air,

Or prouder prancing with mercurial  
skill,

Where Science marshals forth her own  
quadrille.

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher  
views

Upon an heiress or his neighbor's  
bride,

Let him take care that that which he  
pursues

Is not at once too palpably descried.

Full many an eager gentleman oft rues

His haste ; impatience is a blundering  
guide,

Amongst a people famous for reflection,  
Who like to play the fool with circum-  
spection.

But, if you can contrive, get next at  
supper ;

Or if forestall'd, get opposite and  
ogle :—

Oh, ye ambrosial moments ! always  
upper

In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,  
Which sits for ever upon memory's  
crupper,

The ghost of vanish'd pleasures once in  
vogue ! Ill

Can tender souls relate the rise and fall  
Of hopes and fears which shake a single  
ball.

But these precautionary hints can touch  
Only the common run, who must  
pursue,

And watch, and ward ; whose plans a  
word too much

Or little overturns ; and not the few

Or many (for the number's sometimes  
such)

Whom a good mien, especially if new,  
Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense,  
or nonsense.

Permits whate'er they please, or *did* not  
long since.

Our hero, as a hero, young and hand-  
some,

Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger.  
Like other slaves of course must pay his  
ransom,

Before he can escape from so much  
danger

As will environ a conspicuous man.  
Some

Talk about poetry, and "rack and  
manger,"

And ugliness, disease, as toil and  
trouble ;—

I wish they knew the life of a young  
noble.

They are young, but know not youth—  
it is anticipated ;

Handsome but wasted, rich without  
a sou ;

Their vigor in a thousand arms is  
dissipated ;

Their cash comes *from*, their wealth  
goes *to* a Jew ;

Both senates see their nightly votes par-  
ticipated

Between the tyrant's and the tribunes'  
crew ;

And having voted, dined, drank, gamed,  
and whored,

The family vault receives another lord.

But "carpe diem." Juan, "carpe, carpe!"  
To-morrow sees another race as gay

And transient and devour'd by the same  
harpy.

"Life's a poor player,"—then "play  
out the play,

Ye villains !" and above all keep a sharp  
eye

Much less on what you do than what  
you say :

Be hypocritical, be cautious, be  
Not what you *seem*, but always what  
you *see*.

But how shall I relate in other cantos  
Of what befell our hero in the land,

Which 'tis the common cry and lie to  
vaunt as

A moral country ? But I hold my  
hand—

For I disdain to write an *Atalantis* ;

But 'tis as well at once to understand  
You are *not* a moral people, and *you*

know it

Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

What Juan saw and underwent shall be  
My topic, with of course the due restriction

Which is required by proper courtesy ;  
And recollect the work is only fiction,  
And that I sing of neither mine nor me,  
Though every scribe, in some slight  
turn of diction, [doubt  
Will hint allusions never meant. Ne'er  
This—when I speak, I don't hint, but  
speak out.

Whether he married with the third or  
fourth

Offspring of some sage husband-hunt-  
ing countess, [worth  
Or whether with some virgin of more  
(I mean in Fortune's matrimonial  
bounties)

He took to regularly peopling Earth  
Of which your lawful, awful wedlock  
fount is,—

Or whether he was taken in for dam-  
ages, [ages,—

For being too excursive in his hom-

Is yet within the unread events of time.

Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I  
will back

Against the same given quantity of  
rhyme, [tack

For being as much the subject of at-  
As ever yet was any work sublime,

By those who love to say that white is  
black.

So much the better!—I may stand alone,  
But would not change my free thoughts  
for a throne.

Canto XI. 1822-1823. August 29, 1823.

### THE VISION OF JUDGMENT,<sup>1</sup>

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO EN-  
TITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAT  
TYLER"

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!  
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

<sup>1</sup>Southey published in 1821 a poem called "A Vision of Judgment," in which he extolled George III. for his personal virtues, and described his reception into heaven. In the Preface of this poem he bitterly attacked Byron for immorality in his writings. See full accounts of the affair in the biographies of Byron and Southey. The briefest and best treatment of it is in Nichol's Life of Byron, toward the end of Chapter VIII.

#### PREFACE

It hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes many;" and it hath been poetically observed—

"That fools rush in where angels fear to tread."—POPE.

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be worse. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegade intolerance, and implous cant, of the poem by the author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic School," the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere except in his imagination, such a School, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have "talked of him;" for they laughed consumedly.

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures, in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life: and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of "Wat Tyler"?

2ndly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3dly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, "a rancorous renegade?"

4thly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?

And, 5thly, Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare he call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding, its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the motive, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the "Anti-Jacobin," by his present patrons. Hence all this "skimble-scamble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—"qualis ab incepto."

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared—had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonize a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France,—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new

"Vision," his *public* career will not be more favorably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate :  
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull.  
So little trouble had been given of late ;  
Not that the place by any means was full.  
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight"  
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,  
And "a pull altogether," as they say  
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

The angels all were singing out of tune,  
And hoarse with having little else to do.  
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,  
Or curb a runaway young star or two,  
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon  
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,  
Splitting some planet with its playful tail.  
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high.  
Finding their charges past all care below ;  
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky  
Save the recording angel's black bureau ;  
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply  
With such rapidity of vice and woe.  
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,  
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

His business so augmented of late years.  
That he was forced, against his will no doubt.  
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers.)

For some resource to turn himself about,  
And claim the help of his celestial peers,  
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out  
By the increased demand for his remarks :  
Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven ;  
And yet they had even then enough to do,  
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,  
So many kingdoms fitted up anew ;  
Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,  
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,  
They threw their pens down in divine disgust—  
The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust.

This by the way ; 't is not mine to record  
What angels shrink from : even the very devil  
On this occasion his own work abhor'd,  
So surfeited with the infernal revel :  
Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,  
It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.  
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—  
'T is, that he has both generals in-reversion.)

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,  
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,  
And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease.  
With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't ;  
'T will one day finish : meantime they increase.  
"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front.  
Like Saint John's foretold beast ; but ours are born  
Less formidable in the head than horn.  
In the first year of freedom's second dawn  
Died George the Third ; although no tyrant, one

Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn

Left him nor mental nor external sun ;  
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,

A worse king never left a realm undone !

He died—but left his subjects still behind,

One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

He died ! his death made no great stir on earth :

His burial made some pomp ; there was profusion

Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth

Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion.

For these things may be bought at their true worth :

Of elegy there was the due infusion—  
Bought also ; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,

Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all  
The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,

Who cared about the corpse ? The funeral

Made the attraction, and the black the woe.

There throb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall ;

And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,

It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold  
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

So mix his body with the dust ! It might  
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were

The natural compound left alone to fight  
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air ;

But the unnatural balsams merely blight  
What nature made him at his birth,

as bare

As the mere million's base unummied clay—

Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done ;

He's buried ; save the undertaker's bill,  
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone

For him, unless he left a German will ;

But where's the proctor who will ask his son ?

In whom his qualities are reigning still,

Except that household virtue, most uncommon,

Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

" God save the king ! " It is a large economy

In God to save the like ; but if he will  
Besaving, all the better ; for not one am I

Of those who think damnation better still :

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I  
In this small hope of bettering future ill

By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,

The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

I know this is unpopular ; I know  
'Tis blasphemous ; I know one may be damn'd

For hoping no one else may e'er be so ;  
I know my catechism ; I know we're cramm'd

With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow ;

I know that all save England's church have sham'd.

And that the other twice two hundred churches

And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

God help us all ! God help me too ! I am,  
God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,

And not a whit more difficult to damn,  
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,

Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb ;  
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,

As one day will be that immortal fry  
Of almost everybody born to die.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,  
And nodded o'er his keys ; when, lo !

there came  
A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—

A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame ;

In short, a roar of things extremely great,

Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim ;

But he, with first a start and then a wink,

[think !  
Said, " There's another star gone out, I



But ere he could reach to his wings,  
 & therein busy to his right wing pierce  
 his wings—  
 as which he found power to and then  
 his wings  
 "Dante, power!" said the angel, "pro-  
 duce me  
 Waving a gently wing, which gave  
 to power  
 As surely power to him, with man-  
 ners true  
 To which the saint replied: "Well,  
 what's the matter?"  
 "Is justice thus weak with all this  
 matter?"

"No," quoth the cherub: "Grieve the  
 heart a least."  
 "But was it Grieve the heart?" re-  
 sponded the cherub.  
 "And Grieve? what's that?" — The  
 king of England, said  
 The angel: "Well, we won't find  
 change to justice  
 How on the way; but then he wear his  
 head?"  
 "Because the head we saw here had a  
 virtue  
 And never would have got into heaven's  
 good grace.  
 Had he not hung his head in all our faces."

"He was it I remember, king of France:  
 That head of his which could not  
 keep a crown  
 On earth, yet ventured in my face to  
 advance  
 A claim to mine of martyrs—like my  
 own;  
 If I had had my sword, as I had once  
 When I cut ears off, I had cut him  
 down;  
 But having but my keys, and not my  
 brand,  
 I only knock'd his head from out his  
 hand."

"And then he set up such a headless  
 howl,  
 That all the saints came out and took  
 him in;  
 And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by  
 jowl;  
 That fellow Paul—the parvenu! The  
 skin  
 Of St. Bartholomew, which makes his  
 cowl  
 In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd  
 his sin,

So as to make a martyr never speak  
 Better than the man weak and weaker  
 head."

"But that it came up here upon its  
 shoulders  
 There would have been a different tale  
 to tell:  
 The fellow-looking in the mirror beholders  
 Seems to have acted on them like a  
 spell,  
 And at this very foolish head heaven  
 smother  
 Back in its trunk: it may be very well,  
 and seems the custom here, to overthrow  
 whatever has been wisely done below."

The angel answered: "Peter! do not  
 join:  
 The king who comes has head and all  
 entire,  
 And never knew much what it was  
 about—  
 He did as both the popes—by its wire,  
 And will be judged like all the rest, no  
 more:  
 My business and your own is not to  
 inquire  
 Into such matters, but to mind our cue—  
 Which is to act as we are bid to do."

While thus they spake, the angelic can-  
 van,  
 Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,  
 Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the  
 swan  
 Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile  
 or Indus,  
 Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them  
 an old man,  
 With an old soul, and both extremely  
 blind,  
 Halted before the gate, and in his shroud  
 Seated their fellow traveller on a cloud.  
 But bringing up the rear of this bright  
 host  
 A Spirit of a different aspect waved  
 His wings, like thunder-clouds above  
 some coast  
 Whose barren beach with frequent  
 wrecks is paved;  
 His brow was like the deep when tem-  
 pest-toss'd;  
 Fierce and unfathomable thoughts  
 engraved  
 Eternal wrath on his immortal face,  
 And where he gazed a gloom pervaded  
 space.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate  
 Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or Sin,  
 With such a glance of supernatural hate,  
 As made Saint Peter wish himself  
 within ;  
 He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,  
 And sweated through his apostolic  
 skin :

Of course his perspiration was but ichor,  
 Or some such other spiritual liquor.

The very cherubs huddled all together,  
 Like birds when soars the falcon ; and  
 they felt

A tingling to the tip of every feather,  
 And form'd a circle like Orion's belt  
 Around their poor old charge ; who  
 scarce knew whither

His guards had led him, though they  
 gently dealt

With royal manes (for by many stories,  
 And true, we learn the angels all are  
 Tories).

As things were in this posture, the gate  
 flew

Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges  
 Flung over space an universal hue  
 Of many-color'd flame, until its tinges  
 Reach'd even our speck of earth, and  
 made a new

Aurora borealis spread its fringes  
 O'er the North Pole ; the same seen,  
 when ice-bound,

By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's  
 Sound."

And from the gate thrown open issued  
 beaming

A beautiful and mighty Thing of  
 Light,

Radiant with glory, like a banner stream-  
 ing

Victorious from some world-o'erthrow-  
 ing fight :

My poor comparisons must needs be  
 teeming

With earthly likenesses, for here the  
 night

Of clay obscures our best conceptions,  
 saving

Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey  
 raving.

'Twas the archangel Michael ; all men  
 know

The make of angels and archangels,  
 since

There's scarce a scribbler has not one to  
 show,

From the fiends' leader to the angels'  
 prince ;

There also are some altar-pieces, though  
 I really can't say that they much evince  
 One's inner notions of immortal spirits ;  
 But let the connoisseurs explain *their*  
 merits.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;  
 A goodly work of him from whom all  
 glory

And good arise ; the portal past—he  
 stood ;

Before him the young cherubs and  
 saints hoary—

(I say *young*, begging to be understood  
 By looks, not years ; and should be  
 very sorry

To state, they were not older than St.  
 Peter,

But merely that they seem'd a little  
 sweeter).

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down  
 before

That arch-angelic hierarch, the first  
 Of essences angelical, who wore  
 The aspect of a god ; but this ne'er  
 nursed

Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose  
 core

No thought, save for his Master's  
 service, durst

Intrude, however glorified and high ;  
 He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—  
 They knew each other both for good  
 and ill ;

Such was their power, that neither could  
 forget

His former friend and future foe ; but  
 still

There was a high, immortal, proud  
 regret

In either's eye, as if 't were less their  
 will

Than destiny to make the eternal years  
 Their date of war, and their "champ  
 clos" the spheres.

But here they were in neutral space: we  
 know

From Job, that Satan hath the power  
 to pay

A heavenly visit thrice a year or so ;  
 And that the "sons of God," like those  
 of clay,

Must keep him company ; and we might  
 show

From the same book, in how polite a way  
The dialogue is held between the Powers  
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up  
hours.

And this is not a theologic tract,  
To prove with Hebrew and with  
Arabic,  
If Job be allegory or a fact.  
But a true narrative ; and thus I pick  
From out the whole but such and such  
an act  
As sets aside the slightest thought of  
trick.  
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,  
And accurate as any other vision.

The spirits were in neutral space, before  
The gate of heaven ; like eastern  
thresholds is  
The place where Death's grand cause is  
argued o'er,  
And souls despatch'd to that world or  
to this ;  
And therefore Michael and the other  
wore  
A civil aspect : though they did not  
kiss,  
Yet still between his Darkness and his  
Brightness  
There pass'd a mutual glance of great  
politeness.

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern  
beau,  
But with a graceful Oriental bend,  
Pressing one radiant arm just where be-  
low  
The heart in good men is supposed to  
tend ;  
He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,  
But kindly ; Satan met his ancient  
friend  
With more hauteur, as might an old  
Castilian  
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich  
civilian.

He merely bent his diabolic brow  
An instant ; and then raising it, he  
stood  
In act to assert his right or wrong, and  
show  
Cause why King George by no means  
could or should  
Make out a case to be exempt from woe  
Eternal, more than other kings,  
endued

With better sense and hearts, whom his-  
tory mentions,  
Who long have "paved hell with their  
good intentions."

Michael began : "What wouldst thou  
with this man,  
Now dead, and brought before the  
Lord ? What ill  
Hath he wrought since his mortal race  
began,  
That thou canst claim him ? Speak !  
and do thy will,  
If it be just : if in this earthly span  
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil  
His duties as a king and mortal, say,  
And he is thine ; if not, let him have  
way."

"Michael !" replied the Prince of Air,  
"even here,  
Before the Gate of him thou servest,  
must  
I claim my subject : and will make  
appear  
That as he was my worshipper in dust,  
So shall he be in spirit, although dear  
To thee and thine, because nor wine  
nor lust  
Were of his weaknesses ; yet on the  
throne  
He reign'd o'er millions to serve me  
alone.

"Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine* ; it  
was,  
Once, *more* thy Master's : but I triumph  
not  
In this poor planet's conquest ; nor, alas !  
Need he thou servest envy me my lot :  
With all the myriads of bright worlds  
which pass  
In worship round him, he may have  
forgot  
Yon weak creation of such paltry things :  
I think few worth damnation save their  
kings,—

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to  
Assert my right as lord : and even had  
I such an inclination, it were (as you  
Well know) superfluous ; they are  
grown so bad,  
That hell has nothing better left to do  
Than leave them to themselves : so  
much more mad  
And evil by their own internal curse,  
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I  
worse.

" Look to the earth, I said, and say again:  
When this old, blind, mad, helpless,  
weak, poor worm  
Began in youth's first bloom and flush  
to reign.

The world and he both wore a different form,  
And much of earth and all the watery plain  
Of ocean call'd him king: through  
many a storm

His isles had floated on the abyss of time;  
For the rough virtues chose them for  
their clime.

" He came to his sceptre young; he  
leaves it old:

Look to the state in which he found  
his realm,  
And left it; and his annals too behold,  
How to a minion first he gave the helm;  
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold.  
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm

The meanest hearts; and for the rest,  
but glance

Thine eye along America and France.

" 'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last  
(I have the workmen safe :) but as a tool  
So let him be consumed. From out the past

Of ages, since mankind have known  
the rule  
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls  
amass'd

Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsar's  
school,

Take the worst pupil; and produce a  
reign

More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd  
with the slain.

" He ever warr'd with freedom and the  
free:

Nations as men, home subjects, foreign  
foes,

So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'  
Found George the Third their first  
opponent. Whose

History was ever stain'd as his will be  
With national and individual woes?

I grant his household abstinence; I grant  
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

" I know he was a constant consort; own  
He was a decent sire, and middling  
lord.

All this is much, and most upon a throne;  
As temperance, if at Apicius' board.  
Is more than at an anchorite's supper  
shown.

I grant him all the kindest can accord;  
And this was well for him, but not for  
those

Millions who found him what oppression chose.

" The New World shook him off; the  
Old yet groans

Beneath what he and his prepared, if  
not

Completed: he leaves heirs on many  
thrones

To all his vices, without what begot  
Compassion for him—his tame virtues;  
drones

Who sleep, or despots who have now  
forgot

A lesson which shall be re-taught  
them, wake

Upon the thrones of earth; but let them  
quake!

" Five millions of the primitive, who hold  
The faith which makes ye great on  
earth, implored

A part of that vast *all* they held of old.—  
Freedom to worship—not alone your  
Lord.

Michael, but you, and you. Saint Peter!  
cold

Must be your souls, if you have not  
abhor'd

The foe to Catholic participation  
In all the license of a Christian nation.

" True! he allow'd them to pray God;  
but as

A consequence of prayer, refused the  
law

Which would have placed them upon  
the same base

With those who did not hold the  
saints in awe."

But here Saint Peter started from his  
place.

And cried, "You may the prisoner  
withdraw:

Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this  
Guelph,

While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

" Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange  
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)

Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range

The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!"

"Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge  
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;  
And if to this exchange you should be given,  
I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven!"

Here Michael interposed: "Good saint!  
and devil!

Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.

Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil!

Satan, excuse this warmth of his expression,  
And condescension to the vulgar's level:  
Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.

Have you got more to say?"—"No."—"If you please,  
I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,  
Which stirr'd with its electric qualities

Clouds farther off than we can understand,

Although we find him sometimes in our skies:

Infernal thunder shook both sea and land  
In all the planets, and hell's batteries  
Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions

As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

This was a signal unto such damned souls  
As have the privilege of their damnation

Extended far beyond the mere controls  
Of worlds past, present, or to come;  
no station

Is theirs particularly in the rolls  
Of hell assign'd; but where their inclination

Or business carries them in search of game,

They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

They're proud of this—as very well they may,  
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key

Stuck in their loins; or like to an "entré"

Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.

I borrow my comparisons from clay,  
Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be  
Offended with such base low likenesses;  
We know their posts are nobler far than these.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell—

About ten million times the distance reckon'd

From our sun to its earth, as we can tell  
How much time it takes up, even to a second,

For every ray that travels to dispel  
The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd

The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year.

If that the *summer* is not too severe:

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute;

I know the solar beams take up more time

Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;

But then their telegraph is less sublime,

And if they ran a race, they would not win it

'Gainst Satan's courier's bound for their own clime.

The sun takes up some years for every ray

To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

Upon the verge of space, about the size  
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd

(I've seen a something like it in the skies  
In the *Ægean*, ere a squall); it near'd.

And, growing bigger, took another guise:  
Like an aerial ship it tack'd, and

steer'd,

Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar

Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

But take your choice): and then it grew a cloud

And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.

But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd

Of locusts numerous as the heavens  
saw these;  
They shadowed with their myriads  
space; their loud  
And varied cries were like those of  
wild geese  
(If nations may be liken'd to a goose).  
And realized the phrase of "hell broke  
loose."

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John  
Bull,  
Who damned away his eyes as hereto-  
fore:  
There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!"—  
"What's your wull?"  
The temperate Scot exclaimed: the  
French ghost swore  
In certain terms I shan't translate in  
full,  
As the first coachman will; and 'midst  
the war,  
The voice of Jonathan was heard to ex-  
press,  
"Our president is going to war, I guess."

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch,  
and Dane;  
In short, an universal shoal of shades,  
From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,  
Of all climes and professions, years  
and trades,  
Ready to swear against the good king's  
reign,  
Bitter as clubs in cards are against  
spades:  
All summon'd by this grand "subpœna,"  
to  
Try if kings mayn't be damn'd like me  
or you.

When Michael saw this host, he first  
grew pale,  
As angels can; next, like Italian  
twilight,  
He turn'd all colors—as a peacock's tail,  
Or sunset streaming through a Gothic  
skylight  
In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,  
Or distant lightning on the horizon *by*  
night,  
Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review  
Of thirty regiments in red, green and  
blue.

Then he address'd himself to Satan:  
"Why—  
My good old friend, for such I deem  
you, though

Our different parties make us fight so  
shy,

I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;  
Our difference is *political*, and I  
Trust that, whatever may occur below,  
You know my great respect for you:  
and this

Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

"Why, my dear Lucifer, would you  
abuse

My call for witnesses? I did not mean  
That you should half of earth and hell  
produce;

'Tis even superfluous, since two hon-  
est, clean,

True testimonies are enough: we lose  
Our time, nay, our eternity, between  
The accusation and defence: if we  
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immor-  
tality."

Satan replied, "To me the matter is  
Indifferent, in a personal point of  
view:

I can have fifty better souls than this  
With far less trouble than we have  
gone through

Already; and I merely argued his  
Late Majesty of Britain's case with  
you

Upon a point of form: you may dispose  
Of him; I've kings enough below, God  
knows!"

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd  
"multi-faced"

By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then  
we'll call

One or two persons of the myriads placed  
Around our congress, and dispense  
with all

The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may  
be so graced

As to speak first? there's choice  
enough—who shall

It be?" Then Satan answer'd, "There  
are many;

But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well  
as any."

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking  
sprite

Upon the instant started from the  
throng,

Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite;  
For all the fashions of the flesh stick  
long

By people in the next world; where  
unite

All the costumes since Adam's, right  
or wrong.  
From Eve's fig leaf down to the petti-  
coat,  
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds  
Assembled, and exclaim'd, "My  
friends of all  
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst  
these clouds ;  
So let's to business : why this general  
call ?

If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,  
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,  
Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat !  
Saint Peter, may I count upon your  
vote ?"

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake ;  
these things  
Are of a former life, and what we do  
Above is more august ; to judge of kings  
Is the tribunal met : so now you  
know."

"Then I presume those gentlemen with  
wings,"  
Said Wilkes, "are cherubs ; and that  
soul below  
Looks much like George the Third, but  
to my mind  
A good deal older—Bless me ! is he  
blind ?"

"He is what you behold him, and his  
doom  
Depends upon his deeds," the Angel  
said ;

"If you have aught to arraign in him,  
the tomb  
Gives license to the humblest beggar's  
head  
To lift itself against the loftiest."—  
"Some,"

Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them  
laid in lead,  
For such a liberty—and I, for one,  
Have told them what I thought beneath  
the sun."

"Above the sun repeat, then, what thou  
hast

To urge against him," said the Arch-  
angel. "Why,"  
Replied the spirit, "since old scores are  
past,

Must I turn evidence ? In faith, not I.  
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last.  
With all his Lords and Commons : in  
the sky

I don't like ripping up old stories, since  
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to  
oppress

A poor unlucky devil without a shilling ;  
But then I blame the man himself much  
less

Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be  
unwilling

To see him punish'd here for their excess.  
Since they were both damn'd long  
ago, and still in

Their place below : for me, I have for-  
given,

And vote his 'habeas corpus' into  
heaven."

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand  
all this ;

You turn'd to half a courtier ere you  
died.

And seem to think it would not be amiss  
To grow a whole one on the other side  
Of Charon's ferry ; you forget that his

Reign is concluded ; whatso'er betide,  
He won't be sovereign more : you've lost  
your labor,

For at the best he will but be your neigh-  
bor.

"However, I knew what to think of it,  
When I beheld you in your jesting way,  
Flitting and whispering round about the  
spit

Where Belial, upon duty for the day,  
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt.  
His pupil ; I knew what to think, I say :  
That fellow even in hell breeds farther  
ills ;

I'll have him *gagg'd*—'twas one of his  
own bills.

"Call Junius !" From the crowd a  
shadow stalk'd.

And at the name there was a general  
squeeze,

So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd  
In comfort, at their own aerial ease.  
But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but  
to be balk'd,

As we shall see), and jostled hands  
and knees,

Like wind compress'd and pent within a  
bladder,

Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

The shadow came—a tall, thin, gray-  
hair'd figure,

That look'd as it had been a shade on  
earth ;  
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigor,  
But naught to mark its breeding or its  
birth ;  
Now it wax'd little, then again grew  
bigger,  
With now an air of gloom, or savage  
mirth ;  
But as you gazed upon its features, they  
Changed every instant—to *what*, none  
could say.

The more intently the ghosts gazed. the  
less  
Could they distinguish whose the  
features were ;  
The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even  
to guess ;  
They varied like a dream—now here,  
now there ;  
And several people swore from out the  
press,  
They knew him perfectly ; and one  
could swear  
He was his father : upon which another  
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's  
brother :

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,  
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,  
A nabob, a man-midwife ; but the wight  
Mysterious changed his countenance  
at least  
As oft as they their minds ; though in  
full sight  
He stood, the puzzle only was in-  
creased ;  
The man was a phantasmagoria in  
Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

The moment that you had pronounced  
him *one*,  
Presto ! his face changed, and he  
was another ;  
And when that change was hardly well  
put on,  
It varied, till I don't think his own  
mother  
(If that he had a mother) would her son  
Have known, he shifted so from one to  
t'other :  
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,  
At this epistolary "Iron Mask."

For sometimes he like Cerberus would  
seem—  
"Three gentlemen at once" (as sagely  
says

Good Mrs. Malaprop) ; then you might  
deem

That he was not even *one* ; now many  
rays  
Were flashing round him ; and now a  
thick steam  
Hid him from sight—like fogs on Lon-  
don days :  
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to  
people's fancies,  
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own ;  
I never let it out till now, for fear  
Of doing people harm about the throne,  
And injuring some minister or peer,  
On whom the stigma might perhaps be  
blown ;  
It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear !  
'Tis that what Junius we are wont to  
call  
Was *really, truly*, nobody at all.

I don't see wherefore letters should not  
be  
Written without hands, since we daily  
view  
Them written without heads ; and books,  
we see,  
Are fill'd as well without the latter too :  
And really till we fix on somebody  
For certain sure to claim them as his  
due,  
Their author, like the Niger's mouth,  
will bother  
The world to say if *there* be mouth or  
author.

"And who and what art thou?" the  
Archangel said.

"For *that* you may consult my title-  
page."

Replied this mighty shadow of a shade :  
"If I have kept my secret half an age,  
I scarce shall tell it now."—"Canst thou  
upbraid,"

Continued Michael, "George Rex, or  
allege

Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You  
had better

First ask him for *his* answer to my letter :

"My charges upon record will outlast  
The brass of both his epitaph and  
tomb."

"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of  
some past

Exaggeration ? something which may  
doom



Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou wast

Too bitter—is it not so?—in thy gloom  
Of passion?"—"Passion!" cried the  
phantom dim,  
"I loved my country, and I hated him.

"What I have written, I have written:  
let

The rest be on his head or mine!" so  
spoke

Old "Nominis Umbra;" and while  
speaking yet,

Away he melted in celestial smoke.

Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't  
forget

To call George Washington, and John  
Horne Tooke.

And Franklin;"—but at this time there  
was heard

A cry for room, though not a phantom  
stirr'd.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and  
the aid

Of cherubim appointed to that post,  
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made

His way, and look'd as if his journey  
cost

Some trouble. When his burden down  
he laid,

"What's this?" cried Michael; "why,  
'tis not a ghost?"

"I know it," quoth the incubus; "but he  
shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

"Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd  
My left wing, he's so heavy; one would  
think

Some of his works about his neck were  
chain'd.

But to the point; while hovering o'er  
the brink

Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still  
rain'd),

I saw a taper, far below me, wink,  
And stooping, caught this fellow at a  
libel—

No less on history than the Holy Bible.

"The former is the devil's scripture, and  
The latter yours, good Michael: so the  
affair

Belongs to all of us, you understand.  
I snatch'd him up just as you see him  
there,

And brought him off for sentence out of  
hand:

I've scarcely been ten minutes in the  
air—

At least a quarter it can hardly be:  
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

Here Satan said, "I know this man of  
old,

And have expected him for some time  
here;

A sillier fellow you will scarce behold.  
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:

But surely it was not worth while to fold  
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus  
dear:

We had the poor wretch safe (without  
being bored

With carriage) coming of his own accord.

"But since he's here, let's see what he  
has done."

"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anti-ci-  
pates

The very business you are now upon,  
And scribbles as if head clerk to the  
Fates.

Who knows to what his ribaldry may  
run,

When such an ass as this, like Balaam's,  
prates?"

"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he  
has to say:

You know we're bound to that in every  
way."

Now the bard, glad to get an audience,  
which

By no means often was his case below,  
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem,  
and pitch

His voice into that awful note of woe  
To all unhappy hearers within reach

Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in  
flow;

But stuck fast with his first hexameter.  
Not one of all whose gouty feet would  
stir.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be  
spurr'd

Into recitative, in great dismay

Both cherubim and seraphim were heard  
To murmur loudly through their long

array;

And Michael rose ere he could get a word  
Of all his founder'd verses under way,

And cried, "For God's sake stop, my  
friend! 'twere best—

*Non Di, non homines*—you know the  
rest."

A general bustle spread throughout the  
throng,

Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation :

The angels had of course enough of song  
When upon service ; and the generation  
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long

Before, to profit by a new occasion :  
The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd,  
" What ! what !

*Pye* come again ? No more—no more of that !

The tumult grew ; an universal cough  
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,

When Castlereagh has been up long enough

(Before he was first minister of state,  
I mean—the *slaves hear now*) ; some cried  
" Off, off !"

As at a farce ; till, grown quite desperate,

The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose  
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

The varlet was not an ill-favor'd knave ;  
A good deal like a vulture in the face,  
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave

A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace

To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,

Was by no means so ugly as his case ;  
But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,  
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise

With one still greater, as is yet the mode  
On earth besides ; except some grumbling voice,

Which now and then will make a slight inroad

Upon decorous silence, few will twice  
Lift up their lungs when fairly over-crow'd ;

And now the bard could plead his own bad cause.

With all the attitudes of self-applause.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,

He meant no harm in scribbling ; 'twas his way

Upon all topics ; 'twas, besides, his bread,

Of which he butter'd both sides ;  
'twould delay

Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),

And take up rather more time than a day,

To name his works—he would but cite a few—

" Wat Tyler "—" Rhymes on Blenheim "—" Waterloo."

He had written praises of a regicide ;  
He had written praises of all kings whatever ;

He had written for republics far and wide,

And then against them bitterer than ever ;

For pantisocracy he once had cried  
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever ;

Then grew a hearty anti-Jacobin—  
Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

He had sung against all battles, and again

In their high praise and glory ; he had call'd

Reviewing " the ungentle craft," and then

Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd—  
Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men

By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd :

He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,

And more of both than anybody knows.

He had written Wesley's life : here turning round

To Satan, " Sir, I'm ready to write yours,

In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,

With notes and preface, all that most allures

The pious purchaser ; and there's no ground

For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers :

So let me have the proper documents,  
That I may add you to my other saints."

Satan bow'd, and was silent. " Well, if you,

With amiable modesty, decline  
My offer, what says Michael ? There are few

Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.

Mine is a pen of all work ; not so new

As it was once, but I would make you shine  
Like your own trumpet. By the way,  
my own  
Has more of brass in it, and is as well  
blown.

"But talking about trumpets, here's my  
Vision!  
Now you shall judge, all people; yes,  
you shall  
Judge with my judgment, and by my  
decision  
Be guided who shall enter heaven or  
fall.  
I settle all these things by intuition,  
Times present, past, to come, heaven,  
hell, and all.  
Like King Alfonso. When I thus see  
double.  
I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and  
no  
Persuasion on the part of devils, saints,  
Or angels, now could stop the torrent;  
so  
He read the first three lines of the  
contents;  
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual  
show  
Had vanish'd, with variety of scents,  
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they  
sprang,  
Like lightning, off from his "melodious  
twang."

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:  
The angels stopp'd their ears and  
plied their pinions:  
The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down  
to hell;  
The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their  
own dominions—  
(For 'tis not yet decided where they  
dwell,  
And I leave every man to his opinions);  
Michael took refuge in his trump—but,  
lo!  
His teeth were set on edge, he could not  
blow!

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been  
known  
For an impetuous saint, unpraised his  
keys,  
And at the fifth line knock'd the poet  
down;

Who fell like Phaëton, but more at  
ease,  
Into his lake, for there he did not drown;  
A different web being by the Destinies  
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath,  
whene'er  
Reform shall happen either here or there.

He first sank to the bottom—like his  
works,  
But soon rose to the surface—like him-  
self;  
For all corrupted things are buoy'd like  
corks,  
By their own rottenness, like as an elf,  
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he  
lurks.  
It may be, still, like dull books on a  
shelf,  
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life"  
or "Vision,"  
As Welborn says—"the devil turn'd pre-  
cision."

As for the rest, to come to the conclu-  
sion  
Of this true dream, the telescope is  
gone  
Which kept my optics free from all  
delusion,  
And show'd me what I in my turn  
have shown;  
All I saw farther, in the last confusion,  
Was, that King George slipp'd into  
heaven for one;  
And when the tumult dwindled to a  
calm,  
I left him practising the hundredth  
psalm.  
*May 7—October 4, 1821. October 15, 1822.*

#### IMPROMPTUS<sup>1</sup>

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,  
Patron and publisher of rhymes,  
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,  
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,  
The unfledged MS. authors come;  
Thou printest all—and sellest some—  
My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green  
The last new Quarterly is seen.—  
But where is thy new Magazine,  
My Murray?

<sup>1</sup> From letters addressed to Mr. Murray, or to Thomas Moore.

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine  
The works thou deemest most divine—  
The "Art of Cookery," and mine,  
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,  
And Sermons, to thy mill bring grist;  
And then thou hast the "Navy List,"  
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude  
Without "the Board of Longitude,"  
Although this narrow paper would,  
My Murray.

*April 11, 1818. 1830.*

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight  
for at home,  
Let him combat for that of his neighbors;  
Let him think of the glories of Greece  
and of Rome,  
And get knock'd on the head for his labors.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,  
And is always as nobly requited;  
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,  
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.

*November 5, 1820. 1824.*

So we'll go no more a roving  
So late into the night,  
Though the heart be still as loving,  
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,  
And the soul wears out the breast,  
And the heart must pause to breathe,  
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,  
And the day returns too soon,  
Yet we'll go no more a roving  
By the light of the moon.

*February 28, 1817. 1830.*

THE world is a bundle of hay,  
Mankind are the asses who pull;  
Each tugs it a different way,  
And the greatest of all is John Bull.  
*November 5, 1820. 1830.*

Who kill'd John Keats?  
"I," says the Quarterly.<sup>1</sup>  
So savage and Tartarly;  
"Twas one of my feats."

Who shot the arrow?  
"The poet-priest Milman  
(So ready to kill man),  
Or Southey, or Barrow."  
*July 30, 1821. 1830.*

FOR Orford and for Waldegrave  
You give much more than me you gave;  
Which is not fairly to behave.  
My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,  
Be worth a lion fairly sped,  
A live lord must be worth *two* dead,  
My Murray.

And if, as the opinion goes,  
Verse hath a better sale than prose,—  
Certes, I should have more than those,  
My Murray.

But now this sheet is nearly cramm'd,  
So, if *you will*, I shan't be shamm'd,  
And if you *won't*, you may be damn'd,  
My Murray.  
*August 23, 1821. 1830.*

#### STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA

OH, talk not to me of a name great in story;  
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;  
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty  
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?  
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew be-sprinkled.  
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!  
What care I for the wreaths that can only give glory!

Oh, FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,

<sup>1</sup> See the note on page 254.

'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,  
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,  
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

*There* chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;  
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;  
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story.  
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

November, 1831. 1830.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY  
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,  
Since others it hath ceased to move:  
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,  
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;  
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys  
Is lone as some volcanic isle;  
No torch is kindled at its blaze—  
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,  
The exalted portion of the pain  
And power of love, I cannot share,  
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 't is not *here*—  
Such thoughts should shake my soul,  
nor *now*,  
Where glory decks the hero's bier,  
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,  
Glory and Greece, around me see!  
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,  
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)  
Awake, my spirit! Think through  
*whom*

Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,  
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,  
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee  
Indifferent should the smile or frown  
Of beauty be,

If thou regrettest thy youth, *why live?*  
The land of honorable death  
Is here:—up to the field, and give  
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—  
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;  
Then look around, and choose thy ground  
And take thy rest.

At Missolonghi, January 22, 1824  
October 29, 1824.

# SHELLEY

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## SHELLEY

STANZAS—April, 1814 <sup>1</sup>

**AWAY!** the moor is dark beneath the  
moon,  
Rapid clouds have drank the last pale  
beam of even:

**Away!** the gathering winds will call  
the darkness soon,  
And profoundest midnight shroud the  
serene lights of heaven.

**Pause not!** The time is past! Every  
voice cries, **Away!**

**Tempt not** with one last tear thy  
friend's ungentle mood:

**Thy lover's eye**, so glazed and cold, dares  
not entreat thy stay:

**Duty and dereliction** guide thee back  
to solitude.

**Away, away!** to thy sad and silent  
home;

**Pour bitter tears** on its desolated  
hearth;

**Watch the dim shades** as like ghosts  
they go and come,

**And complicate strange webs** of mel-  
ancholy mirth.

**The leaves of wasted autumn woods**  
shall float around thine head:

**The blooms of dewy spring** shall gleam  
beneath thy feet:

**But thy soul** or this world must fade in  
the frost that binds the dead,

**Ere midnight's frown** and morning's  
smile, ere thou and peace may  
meet.

**The cloud shadows of midnight** possess  
their own repose,

**For the weary winds** are silent, or the  
moon is in the deep:

**Some respite** to its turbulence unresting  
ocean knows;

<sup>1</sup> See Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, Vol. I., pp. 410-411.

Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves,  
hath its appointed sleep.

Thou in the grave shalt rest—yet till  
the phantoms flee

Which that house and heath and gar-  
den made dear to thee erewhile,

Thy remembrance, and repentance, and  
deep musings are not free

From the music of two voices and  
the light of one sweet smile.

1814. 1816.

TO COLERIDGE <sup>1</sup>

ΔΑΚΡΥΣΙ ΔΙΟΙΣΙΝ ΗΟΤΜΟΝ 'ΑΗΟΤΜΟΝ

**OH!** THERE are spirits of the air,  
And genii of the evening breeze,  
And gentle ghosts, with eyes as fair  
As star-beams among twilight trees:—  
Such lovely ministers to meet  
Oft hast thou turned from men thy  
lonely feet.

With mountain winds, and babbling  
springs,

And moonlight seas, that are the voice  
Of these inexplicable things

Thou didst hold commune, and rejoice  
When they did answer thee; but they  
Cast, like a worthless boon, thy love  
away.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes  
Beams that were never meant for  
thine,

<sup>1</sup> The poem beginning "Oh, there are spirits in the air" was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew; and at whose character he could only guess imperfectly, through his writings, and accounts he heard of him from some who knew him well. He regarded his change of opinions as rather an act of will than conviction, and believed that in his inner heart he would be haunted by what Shelley considered the better and holier aspirations of his youth. (From Mrs. Shelley's *Note on the Early Poems*.) See also Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, Vol. I., p. 472 and note.



Another's wealth :—tame sacrifice  
To a fond faith! still dost thou pine?  
Still dost thou hope that greeting hands,  
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy  
demands?

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine  
hope  
On the false earth's inconstancy?  
Did thine own mind afford no scope  
Of love, or moving thoughts to thee?  
That natural scenes or human smiles  
Could steal the power to wind thee in  
their wiles.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled  
Whose falsehood left thee broken-  
hearted;  
The glory of the moon is dead;  
Night's ghosts and dreams have now  
departed;  
Thine own soul still is true to thee.  
But changed to a foul fiend through  
misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever  
Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,  
Dream not to chase;—the mad endea-  
vor  
Would scourge thee to severer pangs.  
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,  
Dark as it is, all change would aggra-  
vate. 1815. 1816.

ALASTOR,

OR

THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE

PREFACE

THE poem entitled *Alastor* may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind. It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge, and is still insatiate. The magnificence and beauty of the external world sinks profoundly into the frame of his conceptions, and affords to their modifications a variety not to be exhausted. So long as it is possible for his desires to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous, and tranquil, and self-possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the Being whom he loves. Conversant with speculations of the sublimest and most perfect natures, the vision in which he embodies his own imaginations unites all of wonderful, or wise, or beautiful, which the poet,

the philosopher, or the lover could depicture. The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the functions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The Poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. He seeks in vain for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men. The Poet's self-centred seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin. But that Power which strikes the luminaries of the world with sudden darkness and extinction, by awakening them to too exquisite a perception of its influences, dooms to a slow and poisonous decay those meaner spirits that dare to abjure its dominion. Their destiny is more abject and inglorious as their delinquency is more contemptible and pernicious. They who, deluded by no generous error, instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illustrious superstition, loving nothing on this earth, and cherishing no hopes beyond, yet keep aloof from sympathies with their kind, rejoicing neither in human joy nor mourning with human grief; these, and such as they, have their apportioned curse. They languish, because none feel with them their common nature. They are morally dead. They are neither friends, nor lovers, nor fathers, nor citizens of the world, nor benefactors of their country. Among those who attempt to exist without human sympathy, the pure and tender-hearted perish through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt. All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love not their fellow-beings live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.

"The good die first.

And those whose hearts are dry as summer dust,  
Burn to the socket!"

December 14, 1815.

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, querebam quid amarem, amans amare.—*Confess. St. August.*

EARTH, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!  
If our great Mother has imbued my soul  
With aught of natural piety to feel  
Your love, and recompense the boon  
with mine;  
If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and  
even,  
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,  
And solemn midnight tingling silent-  
ness;  
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere  
wood,  
And winter robing with pure snow and  
crowns  
Of starry ice the gray grass and bare  
boughs;

If spring's voluptuous pantings when she  
 breathes  
 Her first sweet kisses, have been dear to  
 me ;  
 If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast  
 I consciously have injured, but still  
 loved  
 And cherished these my kindred ; then  
 forgive  
 This boast, beloved brethren, and with-  
 draw  
 No portion of your wonted favor now !

Mother of this unfathomable world !  
 Favor my solemn song, for I have loved  
 Thee ever, and thee only ; I have  
 watched  
 Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy  
 steps,  
 And my heart ever gazes on the depth  
 Of thy deep mysteries. I have made  
 my bed  
 In charnels and on coffins, where black  
 death  
 Keeps record of the trophies won from  
 thee,  
 Hoping to still these obstinate ques-  
 tionings  
 Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone  
 ghost,  
 Thy messenger, to render up the tale  
 Of what we are. In lone and silent  
 hours,  
 When night makes a weird sound of its  
 own stillness,  
 Like an inspired and desperate alchy-  
 mist  
 Staking his very life on some dark hope,  
 Have I mixed awful talk and asking  
 looks  
 With my most innocent love, until  
 strange tears  
 Uniting with those breathless kisses,  
 made  
 Such magic as compels the charmed  
 night  
 To render up thy charge : . . . and,  
 though ne'er yet  
 Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanc-  
 tuary,  
 Enough from incommunicable dream,  
 And twilight phantasms, and deep noon-  
 day thought,  
 Has shone within me, that serenely now  
 And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre  
 Suspended in the solitary dome  
 Of some mysterious and deserted fane,  
 I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that  
 my strain

May modulate with murmurs of the air,  
 And motions of the forests and the sea,  
 And voice of living beings, and woven  
 hymns  
 Of night and day, and the deep heart of  
 man.

There was a Poet whose untimely  
 tomb  
 No human hands with pious reverence  
 reared,  
 But the charmed eddies of autumnal  
 winds  
 Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyra-  
 mid  
 Of mouldering leaves in the waste  
 wilderness :—  
 A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden  
 decked  
 With weeping flowers, or votive cypress  
 wreath,  
 The lone couch of his everlasting  
 sleep :—  
 Gentle, and brave, and generous,—no  
 lorn bard  
 Breathed o'er his dark fate one melo-  
 dious sigh :  
 He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.  
 Strangers have wept to hear his passion-  
 ate notes,  
 And virgins, as unknown he passed, have  
 pined  
 And wasted for fond love of his wild  
 eyes.  
 The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to  
 burn,  
 And Silence, too enamored of that voice,  
 Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

By solemn vision, and bright silver  
 dream,  
 His infancy was nurtured. Every sight  
 And sound from the vast earth and  
 ambient air  
 Sent to his heart its choicest impulses,  
 The fountains of divine philosophy  
 Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of  
 great,  
 Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past  
 In truth or fable consecrates, he felt  
 And knew. When early youth had  
 pass'd, he left  
 His cold fireside and alienated home  
 To seek strange truths in undiscovered  
 lands.  
 Many a wide waste and tangled wilder-  
 ness  
 Has lured his fearless steps ; and he has  
 bought

With his sweet voice and eyes, from  
 savage men,  
 His rest and food. Nature's most secret  
 steps  
 He like her shadow has pursued, where'er  
 The red volcano overcanopies  
 Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice  
 With burning smoke, or where bitumen  
 lakes  
 On black bare pointed islets ever beat  
 With sluggish surge, or where the secret  
 caves  
 Rugged and dark, winding among the  
 springs  
 Of fire and poison, inaccessible  
 To avarice or pride, their starry domes  
 Of diamond and of gold expand above  
 Numberless and immeasurable halls,  
 Frequent with crystal column, and clear  
 shrines  
 Of pearl, and thrones radiant with chrys-  
 olite.  
 Nor had that scene of ampler majesty  
 Than gems or gold, the varying roof of  
 heaven  
 And the green earth lost in his heart its  
 claims  
 To love and wonder; he would linger  
 long  
 In lonesome vales, making the wild his  
 home,  
 Until the doves and squirrels would  
 partake  
 From his innocuous hand his bloodless  
 food,  
 Lured by the gentle meaning of his  
 looks,  
 And the wild antelope, that starts  
 whene'er  
 The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend  
 Her timid steps to gaze upon a form  
 More graceful than her own.  
 His wandering step  
 Obedient to high thoughts, has visited  
 The awful ruins of the days of old:  
 Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the  
 waste  
 Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers  
 Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,  
 Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoe'er of  
 strange  
 Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,  
 Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphynx,  
 Dark Æthiopia in her desert hills  
 Conceals. Among the ruined temples  
 there,  
 Stupendous columns, and wild images  
 Of more than man, where marble  
 demons watch

The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead  
 men  
 Hang their mute thoughts on the mute  
 walls around,  
 He lingered, poring on memorials  
 Of the world's youth, through the long  
 burning day  
 Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor,  
 when the moon  
 Filled the mysterious halls with floating  
 shades  
 Suspended he that task, but ever gazed  
 And gazed, till meaning on his vacant  
 mind  
 Flashed like strong inspiration, and he  
 saw  
 The thrilling secrets of the birth of  
 time.  
 Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his  
 food,  
 Her daily portion, from her father's tent,  
 And spread her matting for his couch,  
 and stole  
 From duties and repose to tend his  
 steps:—  
 Enamored, yet not daring for deep awe  
 To speak her love:—and watched his  
 nightly sleep,  
 Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips  
 Parted in slumber, whence the regular  
 breath  
 Of innocent dreams arose: then, when  
 red morn  
 Made paler the pale moon, to her cold  
 home  
 Wildered, and wan, and panting, she  
 returned.

The Poet wandering on, through  
 Arabie  
 And Persia, and the wild Carmanian  
 waste,  
 And o'er the aerial mountains which  
 pour down  
 Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,  
 In joy and exultation held his way;  
 Till in the vale of Cashmere, far within  
 Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants  
 entwine  
 Beneath the hollow rocks a natural  
 bower,  
 Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched  
 His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep  
 There came, a dream of hopes that never  
 yet  
 Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a  
 veiled maid  
 Sate near him, talking in low solemn  
 tones.

Her voice was like the voice of his own  
soul  
Heard in the calm of thought ; its music  
long,  
Like woven sounds of streams and  
breezes, held  
His inmost sense suspended in its web  
Of many-colored woof and shifting  
hues.  
Knowledge and truth and virtue were  
her theme,  
And lofty hopes of divine liberty.  
Thoughts the most dear to him, and  
poesy,  
Herself a poet. Soon the solemn mood  
Of her pure mind kindled through all her  
frame  
A permeating fire : wild numbers then  
She raised, with voice stifled in tremu-  
lous sobs  
Subdued by its own pathos : her fair  
hands  
Were bare alone, sweeping from some  
strange harp  
Strange symphony, and in their branch-  
ing veins  
The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale.  
The beating of her heart was heard to fill  
The pauses of her music, and her breath  
Tumultuously accorded with those fits  
Of intermitted song. Sudden she rose,  
As if her heart impatiently endured  
Its bursting burthen : at the sound he  
turned,  
And saw by the warm light of their own  
life  
Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous  
veil  
Of woven wind, her outspread arms now  
bare,  
Her dark locks floating in the breath of  
night,  
Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips  
Outstretched, and pale, and quivering  
eagerly.  
His strong heart sunk and sickened with  
excess  
Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs  
and quelled  
His gasping breath, and spread his arms  
to meet  
Her panting bosom : . . . she drew back  
a while,  
Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,  
With frantic gesture and short breath-  
less cry  
Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.  
Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and  
night

Involved and swallowed up the vision ;  
sleep,  
Like a dark flood suspended in its course,  
Rolled back its impulse on his vacant  
brain.

Roused by the shock he started from  
his trance—  
The cold white light of morning, the  
blue moon  
Low in the west, the clear and garish  
hills,  
The distinct valley and the vacant woods,  
Spread round him where he stood.  
Whither have fled  
The hues of heaven that canopied his  
bower  
Of yesternight? The sounds that  
soothed his sleep,  
The mystery and the majesty of Earth,  
The joy, the exultation? His wan eyes  
Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly  
As ocean's moon looks on the moon in  
heaven.  
The spirit of sweet human love has sent  
A vision to the sleep of him who spurned  
Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pursues  
Beyond the realms of dream that fleet-  
ing shade ;  
He overleaps the bounds. Alas ! alas !  
Were limbs, and breath, and being in-  
tertwined  
Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, for ever  
lost,  
In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,  
That beautiful shape! Does the dark  
gate of death  
Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,  
O Sleep? Does the bright arch of rain-  
bow clouds,  
And pendent mountains seen in the calm  
lake,  
Lead only to a black and watery depth,  
While death's blue vault, with loathliest  
vapors hung,  
Where every shade which the foul grave  
exhales  
Hides its dead eye from the detested day,  
Conduct, O Sleep, to thy delightful  
realms?  
This doubt with sudden tide flowed on  
his heart ;  
The insatiate hope which it awakened  
stung  
His brain even like despair.  
While daylight held  
The sky, the Poet kept mute conference  
With his still soul. At night the pas-  
sion came,

Like the fierce fiend of a distempered dream  
 And shook him from his rest, and led him forth  
 Into the darkness.—As an eagle, grasped  
 In folds of the green serpent, feels her breast  
 Burn with the poison, and precipitates  
 Through night and day, tempest, and calm, and cloud,  
 Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind flight  
 O'er the wide æry wilderness: thus driven  
 By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,  
 Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,  
 Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,  
 Startling with careless step the moonlight snake,  
 He fled. Red morning dawned upon his flight,  
 Shedding the mockery of its vital hues  
 Upon his cheek of death. He wandered on  
 Till vast Aornos seen from Petra's steep,  
 Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;  
 Through Balk, and where the desolated tombs  
 Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind  
 Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered on,  
 Day after day, a weary waste of hours,  
 Bearing within his life the brooding care  
 That ever fed on its decaying flame.  
 And now his limbs were lean; his scattered hair  
 Sere'd by the autumn of strange suffering  
 Sung dirges in the wind: his listless hand  
 Hung like dead bone within its withered skin;  
 Life, and the lustre that consumed it, shone  
 As in a furnace burning secretly  
 From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,  
 Who ministered with human charity  
 His human wants, beheld with wondering awe  
 Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,  
 Encountering on some dizzy precipice  
 That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind

With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet  
 Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused  
 In its career: the infant would conceal  
 His troubled visage in his mother's robe  
 In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,  
 To remember their strange light in many a dream  
 Of after-times; but youthful maidens, taught  
 By nature, would interpret half the woe  
 That wasted him, would call him with false names  
 Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand  
 At parting, and watch, dim through tears, the path  
 Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasman shore  
 He paused, a wide and melancholy waste  
 Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse urged  
 His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was there,  
 Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.  
 It rose as he approached, and with strong wings  
 Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course  
 High over the immeasurable main.  
 His eyes pursued its flight.—"Thou hast a home,  
 Beautiful bird; thou voyagest to thine home,  
 Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck  
 With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes  
 Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.  
 And what am I that I should linger here,  
 With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,  
 Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned  
 To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers  
 In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and heaven  
 That echoes not my thoughts?" A gloomy smile  
 Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering lips.

For sleep, he knew, kept most relentlessly  
 Its precious charge, and silent death  
 exposed,  
 Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy  
 lure,  
 With doubtful smile mocking its own  
 strange charms.

Startled by his own thoughts he  
 looked around.  
 There was no fair fiend near him, not a  
 sight  
 Or sound of awe but in his own deep  
 mind.  
 A little shallop floating near the shore  
 Caught the impatient wandering of his  
 gaze.  
 It had been long abandoned, for its sides  
 Gaped wide with many a rift, and its  
 frail joints  
 Swayed with the undulations of the tide.  
 A restless impulse urged him to embark  
 And meet lone Death on the drear  
 ocean's waste;  
 For well he knew that mighty Shadow  
 loves  
 The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

The day was fair and sunny, sea and  
 sky  
 Drank its inspiring radiance, and the  
 wind  
 Swept strongly from the shore, blacken-  
 ing the waves.  
 Following his eager soul, the wanderer  
 Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak  
 aloft  
 On the bare mast, and took his lonely  
 seat.  
 And felt the boat speed o'er the tran-  
 quil sea  
 Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision floats  
 Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds  
 Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly  
 Along the dark and ruffled waters fled  
 The straining boat.—A whirlwind swept  
 it on,  
 With fierce gusts and precipitating force,  
 Through the white ridges of the chafed  
 sea.  
 The waves arose. Higher and higher  
 still  
 Their fierce necks writhed beneath the  
 tempest's scourge  
 Like serpents struggling in a vulture's  
 grasp.

Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war  
 Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on  
 blast

Descending, and black flood on whirl-  
 pool driven

With dark obliterating course, he sate :  
 As if their genii were the ministers  
 Appointed to conduct him to the light  
 Of those beloved eyes, the Poet sate  
 Holding the steady helm. Evening  
 came on,

The beams of sunset hung their rain-  
 bow hues

High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted  
 spray

That canopied his path o'er the waste  
 deep;

Twilight, ascending slowly from the  
 east,

Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided  
 locks

O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of  
 day;

Night followed, clad with stars. On  
 every side

More horribly the multitudinous streams  
 Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual  
 war

Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as  
 to mock

The calm and spangled sky. The little  
 boat

Still fled before the storm; still fled,  
 like foam

Down the steep cataract of a wintry  
 river;

Now pausing on the edge of the riven  
 wave;

Now leaving far behind the bursting  
 mass

That fell, convulsing ocean. Safely  
 fled—

As if that frail and wasted human form,  
 Had been an elemental god.

At midnight  
 The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal  
 cliffs

Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone  
 Among the stars like sunlight, and  
 around

Whose caverned base the whirlpools  
 and the waves

Bursting and eddying irresistibly  
 Rage and resound for ever.—Who shall  
 save?—

The boat fled on,—the boiling torrent  
 drove,—

The crags closed round with black and  
 jagged arms,

The shattered mountains overhung the  
 sea,  
 And faster still, beyond all human speed,  
 Suspended on the sweep of the smooth  
 wave,  
 The little boat was driven. A cavern  
 there  
 Yawned, and amid its slant and wind-  
 ing depths  
 Ingulfed the rushing sea. The boat fled  
 on  
 With unrelaxing speed.—“Vision and  
 Love!”  
 The Poet cried aloud, “I have beheld  
 The path of thy departure. Sleep and  
 death  
 Shall not divide us long!”  
 The boat pursued  
 The windings of the cavern. Daylight  
 shone  
 At length upon that gloomy river's flow;  
 Now, where the fiercest war among the  
 waves  
 Is calm, on the unfathomable stream  
 The boat moved slowly. Where the  
 mountain, riven,  
 Exposed those black depths to the azure  
 sky,  
 Ere yet the flood's enormous volume fell  
 Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound  
 That shook the everlasting rocks, the  
 mass  
 Filled with one whirlpool all that ample  
 chasm;  
 Stair above stair the eddying water rose,  
 Circling immeasurably fast, and laved  
 With alternating dash the gnarled roots  
 Of mighty trees, that stretched their  
 giant arms  
 In darkness over it. I'th the midst was left,  
 Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,  
 A pool of treacherous and tremendous  
 calm.  
 Seized by the sway of the ascending  
 stream,  
 With dizzy swiftness, round, and round,  
 and round,  
 Ridge after ridge the straining boat  
 arose,  
 Till on the verge of the extremest curve,  
 Where, through an opening of the rocky  
 bank,  
 The waters overflow, and a smooth spot  
 Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides  
 Is left, the boat paused shuddering.—  
 Shall it sink  
 Down the abyss? Shall the reverting  
 stress  
 Of that resistless gulf embosom it?

Now shall it fall?—A wandering stream  
 of wind,  
 Breathed from the west, has caught the  
 expanded sail,  
 And, lo! with gentle motion, between  
 banks  
 Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,  
 Beneath a woven grove it sails, and hark!  
 The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar,  
 With the breeze murmuring in the  
 musical woods.  
 Where the embowering trees recede,  
 and leave  
 A little space of green expanse, the cove  
 Is closed by meeting banks, whose  
 yellow flowers  
 For ever gaze on their own drooping eyes,  
 Reflected in the crystal calm. The wave  
 Of the boat's motion marred their pen-  
 sive task,  
 Which nought but vagrant bird, or  
 wanton wind,  
 Or falling spear-grass, or their own  
 decay  
 Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet  
 longed  
 To deck with their bright hues his with-  
 ered hair,  
 But on his heart its solitude returned,  
 And he forebore. Not the strong impulse  
 hid  
 In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes, and  
 shadowy frame  
 Had yet performed its ministry: it hung  
 Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud  
 Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the  
 floods  
 Of night close over it.  
 The noonday sun  
 Now shone upon the forest, one vast  
 mass  
 Of mingling shade, whose brown mag-  
 nificence  
 A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge  
 caves,  
 Scooped in the dark base of their æry  
 rocks  
 Mocking its moans, respond and roar for  
 ever,  
 The meeting boughs and implicated  
 leaves  
 Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as led  
 By love, or dream, or god, or mightier  
 Death,  
 He sought in Nature's dearest haunt,  
 some bank,  
 Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More dark  
 And dark the shades accumulate. The  
 oak,

Expanding its immense and knotty arms,  
Embraces the light beech. The pyramids  
Of the tall cedar overarching frame  
Most solemn domes within, and far below,  
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,  
The ash and the acacia floating hang  
Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents, clothed  
In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,  
Starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow around  
The gray trunks, and, as gamesome infants' eyes.  
With gentle meanings, and most innocent wiles,  
Fold their beams round the hearts of those that love,  
These twine their tendrils with the wedded boughs  
Uniting their close union; the woven leaves  
Make network of the dark blue light of day,  
And the night's noontide clearness, mutable  
As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft mossy lawns  
Beneath these canopies extend their swells,  
Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed with blooms  
Minute yet beautiful. One darkest glen  
Sends from its woods of musk-rose, twined with jasmine,  
A soul-dissolving odor, to invite  
To some more lovely mystery. Through the dell,  
Silence and Twilight here, twin-sisters, keep  
Their noonday watch, and sail among the shades,  
Like vaporous shapes half seen; beyond, a well,  
Dark, gleaming, and of most translucent wave,  
Images all the woven boughs above,  
And each depending leaf, and every speck  
Of azure sky, darting between their chasms;  
Nor aught else in the liquid mirror laves  
Its portraiture, but some inconstant star  
Between one foliated lattice twinkling fair,  
Or painted bird, sleeping beneath the moon,  
Or gorgeous insect floating motionless,

Unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings  
Have spread their glories to the gaze of noon.

Hither the Poet came. His eyes beheld  
Their own wan light through the reflected lines  
Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark depth  
Of that still fountain; as the human heart,  
Gazing in dreams over the gloomy grave,  
Sees its own treacherous likeness there.  
He heard  
The motion of the leaves, the grass that sprung  
Startled and glanced and trembled even to feel  
An unaccustomed presence, and the sound  
Of the sweet brook that from the secret springs  
Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit seemed  
To stand beside him—clothed in no bright robes  
Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,  
Borrowed from aught the visible world affords  
Of grace, or majesty, or mystery;—  
But undulating woods, and silent well,  
And leaping rivulet, and evening gloom  
Now deepening the dark shades, for speech assuming,  
Held commune with him, as if he and it  
Were all that was,—only . . . when his regard  
Was raised by intense pensiveness, . . . two eyes,  
Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of thought,  
And seemed with their serene and azure smiles  
To beckon him.

Obedient to the light  
That shone within his soul, he went, pursuing  
The windings of the dell.—The rivulet  
Wanton and wild, through many a green ravine  
Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes it fell  
Among the moss with hollow harmony  
Dark and profound. Now on the polished stones  
It danced; like childhood laughing as it went:



Then through the plain in tranquil  
wanderings crept,  
Reflecting every herb and drooping bud  
That overhung its quietness.—"O stream!  
Whose source is inaccessibly profound,  
Whither do thy mysterious waters tend?  
Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome  
stillness,  
Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow  
gulfs,  
Thy searchless fountain, and invisible  
course  
Have each their type in me: and the  
wide sky,  
And measureless ocean may declare as  
soon  
What oozy cavern or what wandering  
cloud  
Contains thy waters, as the universe  
Tell where these living thoughts reside,  
when stretched  
Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs  
shall waste  
I' the passing wind!"

Beside the grassy shore  
Of the small stream he went; he did  
impress  
On the green moss his tremulous step,  
that caught  
Strong shuddering from his burning  
limbs. As one  
Roused by some joyous madness from  
the couch  
Of fever, he did move; yet not like him  
Forgetful of the grave, where, when  
the flame  
Of his frail exultation shall be spent,  
He must descend. With rapid steps he  
went  
Beneath the shade of trees, beside the  
flow  
Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now  
The forest's solemn canopies were  
changed  
For the uniform and lightsome evening  
sky.  
Gray rocks did peep from the spare moss,  
and stemmed  
The struggling brook: tall spires of  
windlestrae  
Threw their thin shadows down the  
rugged slope,  
And nought but gnarled roots of ancient  
pines  
Branchless and blasted, clenched with  
grasping roots  
The unwilling soil. A gradual change  
was here,

Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow  
away,  
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair  
grows thin  
And white, and where irradiate dewy  
eyes  
Had shone, gleam stony orbs:—so from  
his steps  
Bright flowers departed, and the beauti-  
ful shade  
Of the green groves, with all their odor-  
ous winds  
And musical motions. Calm, he still  
pursued  
The stream, that with a larger volume  
now  
Rolled through the labyrinthine dell,  
and there  
Fretted a path through its descending  
curves  
With its wintry speed. On every side  
now rose  
Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,  
Lifted their black and barren pinnacles  
In the light of evening, and, its precipice  
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,  
Mid toppling stones, black gulfs and  
yawning caves.  
Whose windings gave ten thousand  
various tongues  
To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass  
expands  
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain  
breaks.  
And seems, with its accumulated crags,  
To overhang the world: for wide expand  
Beneath the wan stars and descending  
moon  
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty  
streams,  
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the  
lustrous gloom  
Of leaden-colored even, and fiery hills  
Mingling their flames with twilight, on  
the verge  
Of the remote horizon. The near scene  
In naked and severe simplicity,  
Made contrast with the universe. A  
pine,  
Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the  
vacancy  
Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant  
blast  
Yielding one only response, at each pause  
In most familiar cadence, with the howl  
The thunder and the hiss of homeless  
streams  
Mingling its solemn song, whilst the  
broad river,

Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged  
path,  
Fell into that immeasurable void  
Scattering its waters to the passing  
winds.

Yet the gray precipice and solemn  
pine  
And torrent were not all ;—one silent  
nook  
Was there. Even on the edge of that  
vast mountain,  
Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,  
It overlooked in its serenity  
The dark earth, and the bending vault  
of stars.  
It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to  
smile  
Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped  
The fissured stones with its entwining  
arms,  
And did embower with leaves for ever  
green,  
And berries dark, the smooth and even  
space  
Of its inviolated floor, and here  
The children of the autumnal whirlwind  
bore,  
In wanton sport, those bright leaves,  
whose decay,  
Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,  
Rivals the pride of summer. 'Tis the  
haunt  
Of every gentle wind, whose breath can  
teach  
The wilds to love tranquillity. One  
step,  
One human step alone, has ever broken  
The stillness of its solitude :—one voice  
Alone inspired its echoes ;—even that  
voice  
Which hither came, floating among the  
winds,  
And led the loveliest among human  
forms  
To make their wild haunts the deposi-  
tory  
Of all the grace and beauty that endued  
Its motions, render up its majesty,  
Scatter its music on the unfeeling  
storm,  
And to the damp leaves and blue cavern  
mould,  
Nurses of rainbow flowers and branch-  
ing moss,  
Commit the colors of that varying  
cheek,  
That snowy breast, those dark and  
drooping eyes.

The dim and hornéd moon hung low,  
and poured  
A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge  
That overflowed its mountains. Yellow  
mist  
Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and  
drank  
Wan moonlight even to fulness : not a  
star  
Shone, not a sound was heard ; the very  
winds,  
Danger's grim playmates, on that preci-  
pice  
Slept, clasped in his embrace.—O, storm  
of death !  
Whose sightless speed divides this sullen  
night :  
And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still  
Guiding its irresistible career  
In thy devastating omnipotence,  
Art king of this frail world, from the  
red field  
Of slaughter, from the reeking hos-  
pital,  
The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy  
bed  
Of innocence, the scaffold and the  
throne,  
A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin  
calls  
His brother Death. A rare and regal  
prey  
He hath prepared, prowling around the  
world ;  
Glutted with which thou mayst repose,  
and men  
Go to their graves like flowers or creep-  
ing worms,  
Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine  
The unheeded tribute of a broken heart.

When on the threshold of the green  
recess  
The wanderer's footsteps fell, he knew  
that death  
Was on him. Yet a little, ere it fled,  
Did he resign his high and holy soul  
To images of the majestic past,  
That paused within his passive being  
now,  
Like winds that bear sweet music, when  
they breathe  
Through some dim latticed chamber.  
He did place  
His pale lean hand upon the rugged  
trunk  
Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone  
Reclined his languid head, his limbs did  
rest,

Diffused and motionless, on the smooth  
brink  
Of that obscurest chasm ;—and thus he  
lay,  
Surrendering to their final impulses  
The hovering powers of life. Hope and  
despair,  
The torturers, slept ; no mortal pain or  
fear  
Marred his repose, the influxes of sense,  
And his own being unalloyed by pain,  
Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly fed  
The stream of thought, till he lay breath-  
ing there  
At peace, and faintly smiling :—his last  
sight  
Was the great moon, which o'er the  
western line  
Of the wide world her mighty horn sus-  
pended,  
With whose dun beams inwoven dark-  
ness seemed  
To mingle. Now upon the jagged hills  
It rests, and still as the divided frame  
Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's blood,  
That ever beat in mystic sympathy  
With nature's ebb and flow, grew feeble  
still :  
And when two lessening points of light  
alone  
Gleamed through the darkness, the alter-  
nate gasp  
Of his faint respiration scarce did stir  
The stagnate night :—till the minutest  
ray  
Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered in  
his heart.  
It paused—it fluttered. But when  
heaven remained  
Utterly black, the murky shades in-  
volved  
An image, silent, cold, and motionless,  
As their own voiceless earth and vacant  
air.  
Even as a vapor fed with golden beams  
That ministered on sunlight, ere the west  
Eclipsed it, was now that wondrous  
frame—  
No sense, no motion, no divinity—  
A fragile lute, on whose harmonious  
strings  
The breath of heaven did wander—a  
bright stream  
Once fed with many-voiced waves—a  
dream  
Of youth, which night and time have  
quenched forever.  
Still, dark, and dry, and unremembered  
now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchemy,  
Which wheresoe'er it fell made the earth  
gleam  
With bright flowers, and the wintry  
boughs exhale  
From vernal blooms fresh fragrance!  
O, that God,  
Profuse of poisons, would concede the  
chalice  
Which but one living man has drained,  
who now  
Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that  
feels  
No proud exemption in the blighting  
curse  
He bears, over the world wanders for  
ever,  
Lone as incarnate death ! O, that the  
dream  
Of dark magician in his visioned cave,  
Raking the cinders of a crucible  
For life and power, even when his feeble  
hand  
Shakes in its last decay, were the true  
law  
Of this so lovely world ! But thou art  
fled  
Like some frail exhalation ; which the  
dawn  
Robes in its golden beams,—ah ! thou  
hast fled !  
The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,  
The child of grace and genius. Heart-  
less things  
Are done and said i' the world, and  
many worms  
And beasts and men live on, and mighty  
Earth  
From sea and mountain, city and wilder-  
ness,  
In vesper low or joyous orison,  
Lifts still its solemn voice :—but thou  
art fled—  
Thou canst no longer know or love the  
shapes  
Of this phantasmal scene, who have to  
thee  
Been purest ministers, who are, alas !  
Now thou art not. Upon those pallid  
lips  
So sweet even in their silence, on those  
eyes  
That image sleep in death, upon that  
form  
Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let  
no tear  
Be shed—not even in thought. Nor,  
when those hues  
Are gone, and those divinest lineaments

Worn by the senseless wind, shall live alone  
 In the frail pauses of this simple strain,  
 Let not high verse, mourning the memory  
 Of that which is no more, or painting's woe  
 Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery  
 Their own cold powers. Art and eloquence,  
 And all the shows o' the world are frail and vain  
 To weep a loss that turns their lights to shade.  
 It is a woe too "deep for tears," when all  
 Is reft at once, when some surpassing Spirit,  
 Whose light adorned the world around it, leaves  
 Those who remain behind, not sobs or groans,  
 The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;  
 But pale despair and cold tranquillity.  
 Nature's vast frame, the web of human things,  
 Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.<sup>1</sup> 1815. March, 1816.

<sup>1</sup> None of Shelley's poems is more characteristic than this. The solemn spirit that reigns throughout, the worship of the majesty of nature, the broodings of a poet's heart in solitude—the mingling of the exulting joy which the various aspects of the visible universe inspires with the sad and struggling pangs which human passion imparts—give a touching interest to the whole. The death which he had often contemplated during the last months as certain and near he here represented in such colors as had, in his lonely musings, soothed his soul to peace. The versification sustains the solemn spirit which breathes throughout: it is peculiarly melodious. The poem ought rather to be considered didactic than narrative; it was the outpouring of his own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination inspired, and softened by the recent anticipation of death. (*Mrs. Shelley's note.*)

The deeper meaning of *Alastor* is to be found, not in the thought of death nor in the poet's recent communings with nature, but in the motto from St. Augustine placed upon its title-page, and in the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, composed about a year later. Enamored of ideal loveliness, the poet pursues his vision through the universe, vainly hoping to assuage the thirst which has been stimulated in his spirit, and vainly longing for some mortal realization of his love. *Alastor*, like *Epipsychidion*, reveals the mistake which Shelley made in thinking that the idea of beauty could become incarnate for him in any earthly form: while the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* recognizes the truth that such realization of the ideal is impossible. The very last letter written by Shelley sets the misconception in its proper light: "I think one is always in love with something or

## HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

### I

THE awful shadow of some unseen Power  
 Floats tho' unseen amongst us,—  
 visiting  
 This various world with as inconstant wing  
 As summer winds that creep from flower to flower,—  
 Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,  
 It visits with inconstant glance  
 Each human heart and countenance;  
 Like hues and harmonies of evening,—  
 Like clouds in starlight widely spread,—  
 Like memory of music fled,—  
 Like aught that for its grace may be  
 Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

### II

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate  
 With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon  
 Of human thought or form,—where art thou gone?  
 Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,  
 This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?  
 Ask why the sunlight not for ever  
 Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain river,  
 Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown,  
 Why fear and dream and death and birth  
 Cast on the daylight of this earth  
 Such gloom,—why man has such a scope  
 For love and hate, despondency and hope?

### III

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever  
 To sage or poet these responses given—  
 Therefore the names of Demon,  
 Ghost, and Heaven,

other; the error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is, perhaps, eternal." But this Shelley discovered only with "the years that bring the philosophic mind," and when he was upon the very verge of his untimely death. (*Symonds' Life of Shelley.*)



Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—  
 Now lending splendor, where from secret springs  
 The source of human thought its tribute brings  
 Of waters,—with a sound but half its own,  
 Such as a feeble brook will oft assume  
 In the wild woods, among the mountains lone,  
 Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,  
 Where woods and winds contend, and a vast river  
 Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and raves.

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve—dark, deep Ravine—  
 Thou many-colored, many-voicèd vale,  
 Over whose pines, and crags, and caverns sail  
 Fast cloud shadows and sunbeams : awful scene.  
 Where Power in likeness of the Arve comes down  
 From the ice gulfs that gird his secret throne,  
 Bursting through these dark mountains like the flame  
 Of lightning thro' the tempest ;—thou dost lie,  
 Thy giant brood of pines around thee clinging,  
 Children of elder time, in whose devotion  
 The chainless winds still come and ever came  
 To drink their odors, and their mighty swinging  
 To hear—an old and solemn harmony :  
 Thine earthly rainbows stretched across the sweep  
 Of the ethereal waterfall, whose veil  
 Robes some unsculptured image ; the strange sleep  
 Which when the voices of the desert fail  
 Wraps all in its own deep eternity ;—  
 Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's commotion.  
 A loud, lone sound no other sound can tame ;  
 Thou art pervaded with that ceaseless motion,  
 Thou art the path of that unresting sound—

the Vale of Chamouni (p. 96). Coleridge had never been in the Vale of Chamouni, and drew the suggestion and part of the substance of his *Hymn* from a poem by Frederike Brun.

Dizzy Ravine ! and when I gaze on thee  
 I seem as in a trance sublime and strange  
 To muse on my own separate phantasy,  
 My own, my human mind, which passively  
 Now renders and receives fast influences,  
 Holding an unremitting interchange  
 With the clear universe of things around ;  
 One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings  
 Now float above thy darkness, and now rest  
 Where that or thou art no unbidden guest,  
 In the still cave of the witch Poesy,  
 Seeking among the shadows that pass by  
 Ghosts of all things that are, some shade of thee,  
 Some phantom, some faint image ; till the breast  
 From which they fled recalls them, thou art there !

Some say that gleams of a remoter world  
 Visit the soul in sleep,—that death is slumber,  
 And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber  
 Of those who wake and live.—I look on high ;  
 Has some unknown omnipotence unfurled  
 The veil of life and death ? or do I lie  
 In dream, and does the mightier world of sleep  
 Spread far around and inaccessible  
 Its circles ? For the very spirit fails,  
 Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep  
 That vanishes among the viewless gales !  
 Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,  
 Mont Blanc appears,—still, snowy, and serene—  
 Its subject mountains their unearthly forms  
 Pile around it, ice and rock ; broad vales between  
 Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,  
 Blue as the overhanging heaven, that spread  
 And wind among the accumulated steeps ;  
 A desert peopled by the storms alone,  
 Save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone,  
 And the wolf tracks her there—how hideously

Its shapes are heaped around ! rude,  
 bare, and high,  
 Ghastly, and scarred, and riven.—Is this  
 the scene  
 Where the old Earthquake-demon  
 taught her young  
 Ruin? Were these their toys? or did  
 a sea  
 Of fire envelope once this silent snow?  
 None can reply—all seems eternal now.  
 The wilderness has a mysterious tongue  
 Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so  
 mild,  
 So solemn, so serene, that man may be  
 But for such faith with nature re-  
 conciled;  
 Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to  
 repeal  
 Large codes of fraud and woe; not  
 understood  
 By all, but which the wise, and great,  
 and good  
 Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel.

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and the  
 streams.  
 Ocean, and all the living things that  
 dwell  
 Within the dædal earth; lightning and  
 rain,  
 Earthquake, and fiery flood, and hurri-  
 cane,  
 The torpor of the year when feeble  
 dreams  
 Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep  
 Holds every future leaf and flower;—  
 the bound  
 With which from that detested trance  
 they leap;  
 The works and ways of man, their death  
 and birth,  
 And that of him and all that his may be;  
 All things that move and breathe with  
 toil and sound  
 Are born and die; revolve, subside and  
 swell.  
 Power dwells apart in its tranquillity  
 Remote, serene, and inaccessible:  
 And *this*, the naked countenance of  
 earth,  
 On which I gaze, even these primeval  
 mountains  
 Teach the adverting mind. The glaciers  
 creep  
 Like snakes that watch their prey, from  
 their far fountains,  
 Slow rolling on: there, many a precipice,  
 Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal  
 power

Have piled: dome, pyramid, and pin-  
 nacle,  
 A city of death, distinct with many a  
 tower  
 And wall impregnable of beaming ice.  
 Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin  
 Is there, that from the boundaries of  
 the sky  
 Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines  
 are strewn  
 Its destined path, or in the mangled soil  
 Branchless and shattered stand; the  
 rocks, drawn down  
 From yon remotest waste, have over-  
 thrown  
 The limits of the dead and living world.  
 Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-  
 place  
 Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes  
 its spoil;  
 Their food and their retreat for ever  
 gone,  
 So much of life and joy is lost. The race  
 Of man, flies far in dread; his work and  
 dwelling  
 Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's  
 stream,  
 And their place is not known. Below,  
 vast caves  
 Shine in the rushing torrents' restless  
 gleam,  
 Which from those secret chasms in  
 tumult welling  
 Meet in the vale, and one majestic River,  
 The breath and blood of distant lands,  
 for ever  
 Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,  
 Breathes its swift vapors to the cir-  
 cling air.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:—the  
 power is there,  
 The still and solemn power of many  
 sights,  
 And many sounds, and much of life and  
 death.  
 In the calm darkness of the moonless  
 nights,  
 In the lone glare of day, the snow  
 descend  
 Upon that Mountain; none behold  
 them there,  
 Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking  
 sun,  
 Or the star-beams dart through them:  
 —Winds contend  
 Silently there, and heap the snow with  
 breath  
 Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home

The voiceless lightning in these solitudes  
Keeps innocently, and like vapor broods  
Over the snow. The secret strength of  
things  
Which governs thought, and to the in-  
finite dome  
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!  
And what were thou, and earth, and  
stars, and sea,  
If to the human mind's imaginings  
Silence and solitude were vacancy?

*July 23, 1816. 1817.*

TO MARY — —

DEDICATION OF THE REVOLT OF ISLAM

So now my summer task is ended, Mary,  
And I return to thee, mine own heart's  
home;  
As to his Queen some victor Knight of  
Faëry,  
Earning bright spoils for her en-  
chanted dome;  
Nor thou disdain that, ere my fame  
become  
A star among the stars of mortal night,  
If it indeed may cleave its natal gloom,  
Its doubtful promise thus I would unite  
With thy beloved name, thou Child of  
love and light.

The toil which stole from thee so many  
an hour  
Is ended—and the fruit is at thy feet!  
No longer where the woods to frame a  
bower  
With interlaced branches mix and  
meet,  
Or where, with sound like many voices  
sweet,  
Waterfalls leap among wild islands  
green  
Which framed for my lone boat a  
lone retreat  
Of moss-grown trees and weeds, shall I  
be seen:  
But beside thee, where still my heart  
has ever been.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine,  
dear Friend, when first  
The clouds which wrap this world  
from youth did pass.  
I do remember well the hour which  
burst  
My spirit's sleep: a fresh Maydawn it  
was,  
When I walked forth upon the glitter-  
ing grass,

And wept, I knew not why: until there  
rose  
From the near schoolroom voices  
that, alas!  
Were but one echo from a world of  
woes—  
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants  
and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands, and  
looked around,  
But none was near to mock my  
streaming eyes,  
Which poured their warm drops on  
the sunny ground—  
So, without shame, I spake:—"I will  
be wise,  
And just, and free, and mild, if in me  
lies  
Such power, for I grow weary to behold  
The selfish and the strong still tyrann-  
ize  
Without reproach or check." I then  
controlled  
My tears, my heart grew calm, and I  
was meek and bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest  
thought  
Heap knowledge from forbidden  
mines of lore,  
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or  
taught  
I cared to learn, but from that secret  
store  
Wrought linked armor for my soul,  
before  
It might walk forth to war among man-  
kind;  
Thus power and hope were strength-  
ened more and more  
Within me, till there came upon my  
mind  
A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which  
I pined.

Alas that love should be a blight and  
snare  
To those who seek all sympathies in  
one!—  
Such once I sought in vain; then black  
despair,  
The shadow of a starless night, was  
thrown  
Over the world in which I moved  
alone:  
Yet never found I one not false to me,  
Hard hearts, and cold, like weights  
of icy stone



Which crushed and withered mine,  
that could not be  
Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived  
by thee.

Thou Friend, whose presence on my  
wintry heart  
Fell, like bright Spring upon some  
herbless plain,  
How beautiful and calm and free thou  
wert  
In thy young wisdom, when the  
mortal chain  
Of Custom thou didst burst and rend  
in twain,  
And walk as free as light the clouds  
among,  
Which many an envious slave then  
breathed in vain  
From his dim dungeon, and my spirit  
sprung  
To meet thee from the woes which had  
begirt it long!

No more alone through the world's  
wilderness,  
Although I trod the paths of high  
intent,  
I journeyed now: no more companion-  
less,  
Where solitude is like despair, I  
went.—  
There is the wisdom of a stern content  
When Poverty can blight the just and  
good,  
When Infamy dares mock the in-  
nocent,  
And cherished friends turn with the  
multitude  
To trample: this was ours, and we un-  
shaken stood!

Now has descended a serener hour,  
And, with inconstant fortune, friends  
return;  
Though suffering leaves the knowledge  
and the power  
Which says "Let scorn be not repaid  
with scorn."  
And from thy side two gentle babes  
are born  
To fill our home with smiles, and thus  
are we  
Most fortunate beneath life's beaming  
morn:  
And these delights, and thou, have been  
to me  
The parents of the Song I consecrate to  
thee.

Is it that now my inexperienced fingers  
But strike the prelude of a loftier  
strain?

Or must the lyre on which my spirit  
lingers

Soon pause in silence, ne'er to sound  
again,

Though it might shake the Anarch  
Custom's reign,  
And charm the minds of men to Truth's  
own sway.

Holier than was Amphion's? I would  
fain

Reply in hope—but I am worn away,  
And Death and Love are yet contending  
for their prey.

And what art thou? I know, but dare  
not speak:

Time may interpret to his silent years.  
Yet in the paleness of thy thoughtful  
cheek,

And in the light thine ample fore-  
head wears,

And in thy sweetest smiles, and in  
thy tears.

And in thy gentle speech, a prophecy  
Is whispered, to subdue my fondest  
fears:

And, through thine eyes, even in thy  
soul I see

A lamp of vestal fire burning internally.

They say that thou wert lovely from  
thy birth,

Of glorious parents, thou aspiring  
Child.

I wonder not—for One then left this  
earth

Whose life was like a setting planet  
mild,

Which clothed thee in the radiance  
undefiled

Of its departing glory; still her fame  
Shines on thee, through the tempests

dark and wild

Which shake these latter days; and  
thou canst claim

The shelter, from thy Sire, of an im-  
mortal name.

One voice came forth from many a  
mighty spirit

Which was the echo of three-thousand  
years;

And the tumultuous world stood mute  
to hear it,

As some lone man who in a desert  
hears

The music of his home :—unwonted  
fears  
Fell on the pale oppressors of our race,  
And Faith and Custom and low-  
thoughted cares,  
Like thunder-stricken dragons, for a  
space  
Left the torn human heart, their food  
and dwelling-place.

Truth's deathless voice pauses among  
mankind !

If there must be no response to my  
cry—

If men must rise and stamp, with fury  
blind,

On his pure name who loves them—  
thou and I,

Sweet friend ! can look from our  
tranquillity

Like lamps into the world's tempestuous  
night,—

Two tranquil stars, while clouds are  
passing by

Which wrap them from the foundering  
seaman's sight.

That burn from year to year with unex-  
tinguished light.

1817. 1818.

#### OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique  
land

Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs  
of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on  
the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose  
frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold  
command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions  
read

Which yet survive, stamped on these  
lifeless things.

The hand that mocked them and the  
heart that fed :

And on the pedestal these words appear :  
" My name is Ozymandias, king of  
kings :

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and  
despair ! "

Nothing beside remains. Round the  
decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and  
bare

The lone and level sands stretch far  
away.

1817. 1818.

#### ON A FADED VIOLET

THE odor from the flower is gone  
Which like thy kisses breathed on me ;  
The color from the flower is flown  
Which glowed of thee and only thee !

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,  
It lies on my abandoned breast,  
And mocks the heart which yet is warm,  
With cold and silent rest.

I weep,—my tears revive it not !  
I sigh,—it breathes no more on me ;  
Its mute and uncomplaining lot  
Is such as mine should be.

1818. 1821.

#### LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS

MANY a green isle needs must be  
In the deep wide sea of misery,  
Or the mariner, worn and wan,  
Never thus could voyage on  
Day and night, and night and day,  
Drifting on his dreary way,  
With the solid darkness black  
Closing round his vessel's track ;  
Whilst above the sunless sky,  
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,  
And behind the tempest fleet  
Hurries on with lightning feet,  
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,  
Till the ship has almost drank  
Death from the o'er-brimming deep ;  
And sinks down, down, like that sleep  
When the dreamer seems to be  
Weltering through eternity ;  
And the dim low line before  
Of a dark and distant shore  
Still recedes, as ever still  
Longing with divided will,  
But no power to seek or shun,  
He is ever drifted on  
O'er the unreposing wave  
To the haven of the grave.  
What, if there no friends will greet ;  
What, if there no heart will meet  
His with love's impatient beat ;  
Wander wheresoe'er he may,  
Can he dream before that day  
To find refuge from distress  
In friendship's smile, in love's caress ?  
Then 'twill wreak him little woe  
Whether such there be or no :  
Senseless is the breast, and cold,  
Which relenting love would fold ;  
Bloodless are the veins and chill

Which the pulse of pain did fill ;  
 Every little living nerve  
 That from bitter words did swerve  
 Round the tortured lips and brow,  
 Are like sapless leaflets now  
 Frozen upon December's bough.  
 On the beach of a northern sea  
 Which tempests shake eternally,  
 As once the wretch there lay to sleep,  
 Lies a solitary heap,  
 One white skull and seven dry bones,  
 On the margin of the stones,  
 Where a few gray rushes stand,  
 Boundaries of the sea and land :  
 Nor is heard one voice of wail  
 But the sea-mews, as they sail  
 O'er the billows of the gale ;  
 Or the whirlwind up and down  
 Howling, like a slaughtered town,  
 When a king in glory rides  
 Through the pomp of fratricides :  
 Those unburied bones around  
 There is many a mournful sound ;  
 There is no lament for him,  
 Like a sunless vapor, dim,  
 Who once clothed with life and thought  
 What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie  
 In the waters of wide Agony :  
 To such a one this morn was led  
 My bark by soft winds piloted :  
 'Mid the mountains Euganean  
 I stood listening to the pæan,  
 With which the legioned rooks did hail  
 The sun's uprise majestic ;  
 Gathering round with wings all hoar,  
 Thro' the dewy mist they soar  
 Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven  
 Bursts, and then, as clouds all hoar,  
 Flecked with fire and azure, lie  
 In the unfathomable sky,  
 So their plumes of purple grain,  
 Starred with drops of golden rain,  
 Gleam above the sunlight woods,  
 As in silent multitudes  
 On the morning's fitful gale  
 Thro' the broken mist they sail,  
 And the vapors cloven and gleaming  
 Follow down the dark steep streaming.  
 Till all is bright, and clear, and still,  
 Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea  
 The waveless plain of Lombardy,  
 Bounded by the vaporous air,  
 Islanded by cities fair ;  
 Underneath day's azure eyes  
 Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,

A peopled labyrinth of walls,  
 Amphitrite's destined halls.  
 Which her hoary sire now paves  
 With his blue and beaming waves.  
 Lo ! the sun upsprings behind,  
 Broad, red, radiant, half reclined  
 On the level quivering line  
 Of the waters crystalline ;  
 And before that chasm of light,  
 As within a furnace bright,  
 Column, tower, and dome, and spire,  
 Shine like obelisks of fire,  
 Pointing with inconstant motion  
 From the altar of dark ocean  
 To the sapphire-tinted skies ;  
 As the flames of sacrifice  
 From the marble shrines did rise,  
 As to pierce the dome of gold  
 Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City, thou hast been  
 Ocean's child, and then his queen ;  
 Now is come a darker day,  
 And thou soon must be his prey,  
 If the power that raised thee here  
 Hallow so thy watery bier.  
 A less drear ruin than now,  
 With thy conquest-branded brow  
 Stooping to the slave of slaves  
 From thy throne, among the waves  
 Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew  
 Flies, as once before it flew,  
 O'er thine isles depopulate,  
 And all is in its ancient state,  
 Save where many a palace gate  
 With green sea-flowers overgrown  
 Like a rock of ocean's own,  
 Topples o'er the abandoned sea  
 As the tides change sullenly.  
 The fisher on his watery way,  
 Wandering at the close of day,  
 Will spread his sail and seize his oar  
 Till he pass the gloomy shore,  
 Lest thy dead should, from their sleep  
 Bursting o'er the starlight deep,  
 Lead a rapid masque of death  
 O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold  
 Quivering through aerial gold,  
 As I now behold them here,  
 Would imagine not they were  
 Sepulchres, where human forms,  
 Like pollution-nourished worms  
 To the corpse of greatness cling,  
 Murdered, and now mouldering :  
 But if Freedom should awake  
 In her omnipotence, and shake  
 From the Celtic Anarch's hold

keys of dungeons cold,  
 hundred cities lie  
 like thee, ingloriously,  
 d all thy sister band  
 lorn this sunny land,  
 ; memories of old time  
 w virtues more sublime ;  
 erish thou and they,  
 which stain truth's rising day  
 un consumed away,  
 in spare ye : while like flowers,  
 aste of years and hours,  
 ur dust new nations spring  
 ore kindly blossoming.  
 let there only be  
 ; o'er thy hearthless sea  
 arment of thy sky  
 the world immortally,  
 emembrance, more sublime  
 e tattered pall of time,  
 carce hides thy visage wan ;—  
 empest-cleaving Swan'  
 ongs of Albion,  
 'rom his ancestral streams  
 night of evil dreams,  
 nest in thee ; and Ocean  
 ed him with such emotion  
 joy grew his, and sprung  
 s lips like music flung  
 ighty thunder-fit  
 ing terror :—what though yet  
 unfailing River,  
 thro' Albion winds for ever  
 with melodious wave  
 sacred Poet's grave,  
 ts latest nursling fled ?  
 ough thou with all thy dead  
 an for this fame repay  
 hine own ? oh, rather say,  
 thy sins and slaveries foul  
 id a sunlike soul ?—  
 host of Homer clings  
 camander's wasting springs ;  
 est Shakespere's might  
 on and the world with light  
 niscient power which he  
 'mid mortality ;  
 ove from Petrarch's urn,  
 d yon hills doth burn,  
 hless lamp by which the heart  
 ngs unearthly :—so thou art  
 spirit—so shall be  
 ' that did refuge thee.

sun floats up the sky  
 ight-winged Liberty,  
 universal light  
 o level plain and height ;

<sup>1</sup> Byron.

From the sea a mist has spread,  
 And the beams of morn lie dead  
 On the towers of Venice now,  
 Like its glory long ago.  
 By the skirts of that gray cloud  
 Many-domed Padua proud  
 Stands, a peopled solitude,  
 'Mid the harvest-shining plain,  
 Where the peasant heaps his grain  
 In the garner of his foe,  
 And the milk-white oxen slow  
 With the purple vintage strain,  
 Heaped upon the creaking wain,  
 That the brutal Celt may swill  
 Drunken sleep with savage will ;  
 And the sickle to the sword  
 Lies unchanged, though many a lord,  
 Like a weed whose shade is poison,  
 Overgrows this region's foison,  
 Sheaves of whom are ripe to come  
 To destruction's harvest home :  
 Men must reap the things they sow,  
 Force from force must ever flow,  
 Or worse ; but 'tis a bitter woe  
 That love or reason cannot change  
 The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.

Padua, thou within whose walls  
 Those mute guests at festivals,  
 Son and Mother, Death and Sin,  
 Played at dice for Ezzelin,  
 Till Death cried, "I win, I win !" <sup>1</sup>  
 And Sin cursed to lose the wager,  
 But Death promised, to assuage her,  
 That he would petition for  
 Her to be made Vice-Emperor,  
 When the destined years were o'er,  
 Over all between the Po  
 And the eastern Alpine snow,  
 Under the mighty Austrian.  
 Sin smiled so as Sin only can,  
 And since that time, ay, long before,  
 Both have ruled from shore to shore,  
 That incestuous pair, who follow  
 Tyrants as the sun the swallow,  
 As Repentance follows Crime,  
 And as changes follow Time.

In thine halls the lamp of learning,  
 Padua, now no more is burning ;  
 Like a meteor, whose wild way  
 Is lost over the grave of day,  
 It gleams betrayed and to betray :  
 Once remotest nations came  
 To adore that sacred flame,  
 When it lit not many a hearth  
 On this cold and gloomy earth :  
 Now new fires from antique light  
 Spring beneath the wide world's might ;

But their spark lies dead in thee,  
Trampled out by tyranny.  
As the Norway woodman quells,  
In the depth of piny dells,  
One light flame among the brakes,  
While the boundless forest shakes,  
And its mighty trunks are torn  
By the fire thus lowly born :  
The spark beneath his feet is dead,  
He starts to see the flames it fed  
Howling through the darkened sky  
With a myriad tongues victoriously,  
And sinks down in fear : so thou,  
O Tyranny, beholdest now  
Light around thee, and thou hearest  
The loud flames ascend, and fearest :  
Grovel on the earth : ay, hide  
In the dust thy purple pride !

Noon descends around me now :  
'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,  
When a soft and purple mist  
Like a vaporous amethyst,  
Or an air-dissolved star  
Mingling light and fragrance, far  
From the curved horizon's bound  
To the point of heaven's profound,  
Fills the overflowing sky :  
And the plains that silent lie  
Underneath, the leaves unsodden  
Where the infant frost has trodden  
With his morning-winged feet,  
Whose bright print is gleaming yet ;  
And the red and golden vines,  
Piercing with their trellised lines  
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness ;  
The dun and bladed grass no less,  
Pointing from this hoary tower  
In the windless air ; the flower  
Glimmering at my feet ; the line  
Of the olive-sandalled Apennine,  
In the south dimly islanded :  
And the Alps, whose snows are spread  
High between the clouds and sun ;  
And of living things each one ;  
And my spirit which so long  
Darkened this swift stream of song,  
Interpenetrated lie  
By the glory of the sky :  
Be it love, light, harmony,  
Odor or the soul of all  
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,  
Or the mind which feeds this verse  
Peopling the lone universe.

Noon descends, and after noon  
Autumn's evening meets me soon,  
Leading the infantine moon,  
And that one star, which to her

Almost seems to minister  
Half the crimson light she brings  
From the sunset's radiant springs :  
And the soft dreams of the morn  
(Which like winged winds had borne  
To that silent isle, which lies  
'Mid remembered agonies,  
The frail bark of this lone being)  
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,  
And its ancient pilot, Pain,  
Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be  
In the sea of life and agony :  
Other spirits float and flee  
O'er that gulf : even now, perhaps,  
On some rock the wild wave wraps,  
With folded wings they waiting sit  
For my bark, to pilot it  
To some calm and blooming cove,  
Where for me, and those I love,  
May a windless bower be built,  
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,  
In a dell 'mid lawny hills,  
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,  
And soft sunshine, and the sound  
Of old forests echoing round,  
And the light and smell divine  
Of all flowers that breathe and shine :  
We may live so happy there,  
That the spirits of the air,  
Envyng us, may even entice  
To our healing paradise  
The polluting multitude ;  
But their rage would be subdued  
By that clime divine and calm,  
And the winds whose wings rain balm  
On the uplifted soul, and leaves  
Under which the bright sea heaves ;  
While each breathless interval  
In their whisperings musical  
The inspired soul supplies  
With its own deep melodies,  
And the love which heals all strife  
Circling, like the breath of life,  
All things in that sweet abode  
With its own mild brotherhood :  
They, not it, would change ; and soon  
Every sprite beneath the moon  
Would repent its envy vain,  
And the earth grow young again.

*October, 1818. 1819.*

#### STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
The waves are dancing fast and bright

Blue isles and snowy mountains wear  
 The purple noon's transparent might,  
 The breath of the moist earth is light,  
 Around its unexpanded buds :  
 Like many a voice of one delight,  
 The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
 The City's voice itself is soft like Soli-  
 tude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor  
 With green and purple seaweeds  
 strown :  
 I see the waves upon the shore,  
 Like light dissolved in star-showers,  
 thrown :

I sit upon the sands alone,  
 The lightning of the noontide ocean  
 Is flashing round me, and a tone  
 Arises from its measured motion,  
 How sweet ! did any heart now share in  
 my emotion.

Alas ! I have nor hope nor health,  
 Nor peace within nor calm around,  
 Nor that content surpassing wealth  
 The sage in meditation found,  
 And walked with inward glory  
 crowned—

Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leis-  
 ure.

Others I see whom these surround—  
 Smiling they live, and call life pleas-  
 ure ;—

To me that cup has been dealt in another  
 measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
 Even as the winds and waters are ;  
 I could lie down like a tired child,  
 And weep away the life of care  
 Which I have borne and yet must  
 bear,

Till death like sleep might steal on me,  
 And I might feel in the warm air  
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea  
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last  
 monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,  
 As I, when this sweet day is gone,  
 Which my lost heart, too soon grown  
 old,

Insults with this untimely moan ;  
 They might lament—for I am one  
 Whom men love not,—and yet regret,  
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun  
 Shall on its stainless glory set.  
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in  
 memory yet. 1818. 1824.

## SONNET: ENGLAND IN 1819

AN old, mad, blind, despised, and dying  
 king,—  
 Princes, the dregs of their dull race,  
 who flow  
 Through public scorn,—mud from a  
 muddy spring,—  
 Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor  
 know,  
 But leech-like to their fainting country  
 cling,  
 Till they drop, blind in blood, without a  
 blow,—  
 A people starved and stabbed in the  
 untilled field,—  
 An army, which liberticide and prey  
 Makes as a two-edged sword to all who  
 wield  
 Golden and sanguine laws which tempt  
 and slay ;  
 Religion Christless, Godless—a book  
 sealed ;  
 A Senate,—Time's worst statute unre-  
 pealed,—  
 Are graves, from which a glorious  
 Phantom may  
 Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.  
 1819. 1839.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND<sup>1</sup>

## I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of  
 Autumn's being,  
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the  
 leaves dead  
 Are driven, like ghosts from an en-  
 chanter fleeing,  
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic  
 red,  
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes : O thou,  
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed  
 The winged seeds, where they lie cold  
 and low,

<sup>1</sup> This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it. (Shelley's note.)

Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth,  
and fill  
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed  
in air)  
With living hues and odors plain and  
hill;

'Wild Spirit, which art moving every-  
where;  
Destroyer and preserver; hear, Oh hear!

## II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep  
sky's commotion,  
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves  
are shed,  
Shook from the tangled boughs of  
Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are  
spread  
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the  
head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the  
dim verge  
Of the horizon to the zenith's height  
The locks of the approaching storm.  
Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing  
night  
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst:  
Oh hear!

## III

Thou who didst waken from his sum-  
mer dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline  
streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay.  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser  
day,

All overgrown with azure moss and  
flowers  
So sweet, the sense faints picturing  
them! Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level  
powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while  
far below  
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods  
which wear  
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with  
fear,  
And tremble and despoil themselves:  
Oh hear!

## IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;  
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and  
share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free  
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even  
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over  
heaven,  
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed  
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er  
have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore  
need.

Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!  
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained  
and bowed  
One too like thee: tameless, and swift,  
and proud.

## V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is  
What if my leaves are falling like its own  
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal-  
tone,  
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou  
spirit fierce,  
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe  
Like withered leaves to quicken a new  
birth!

And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished  
hearth

Ashes and sparks, my words among  
mankind!

Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O, wind,  
If Winter comes, can Spring be far be-  
hind ? 1819. 1820.

### THE INDIAN SERENADE

I **ARISE** from dreams of thee  
In the first sweet sleep of night,  
When the winds are breathing low,  
And the stars are shining bright :  
I arise from dreams of thee,  
And a spirit in my feet  
Hath led me—who knows how !  
To thy chamber window, Sweet !

The wandering airs they faint  
On the dark, the silent stream—  
And the Champak odors fail  
Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;  
The nightingale's complaint,  
It dies upon her heart ;—  
As I must on thine,  
O ! beloved as thou art !

Oh lift me from the grass !  
I die ! I faint ! I fall !

Let thy love in kisses rain  
On my lips and eyelids pale.  
My cheek is cold and white, alas !  
My heart beats loud and fast ;—  
Oh ! press it to thine own again,  
Where it will break at last.  
1819. 1822.

### LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE Fountains mingle with the River  
And the Rivers with the Ocean,  
The winds of Heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion ;  
Nothing in the world is single ;  
All things by a law divine  
In one spirit meet and mingle.  
Why not I with thine ?—

See the mountains kiss high Heaven  
And the waves clasp one another ;  
No sister-flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother,  
And the sunlight clasps the earth  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea :  
What are all these kissings worth  
If thou kiss not me ? . 1819. 1819.

## PROMETHEUS UNBOUND<sup>1</sup>

### A LYRICAL DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

AUDISNE HAEC AMPHIAEAE, SUB TERRAM ABDITE ?

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROMETHEUS	MERCURY	}	Oceanides
DEMONOGORGON	HERCULES		
JUPITER	ASIA	}	
THE EARTH	PANTHEA		
OCEAN	IONE	}	
APOLLO THE PHANTASM OF JUPITER			
THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH			
THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON			
SPIRITS OF THE HOURS			
SPIRITS, ECHOES, FAUNS, FURIES			

#### ACT I

SCENE—A RAVINE OF ICY ROCKS IN THE  
INDIAN CAUCASUS.

PROMETHEUS is discovered bound to the  
Precipice. PANTHEA and IONE are  
seated at his feet. Time, night. Dur-  
ing the Scene, morning slowly breaks.

<sup>1</sup> See note at the end of the poem.

*Prometheus.* Monarch of Gods and  
Demons, and all Spirits  
But One, who throng those bright and  
rolling worlds  
Which Thou and I alone of living things  
Behold with sleepless eyes ! regard this  
Earth  
Made multitudinous with thy slaves,  
whom thou  
Requitest for knee-worship, prayer, and  
praise,  
And toil, and hecatombs of broken  
hearts,  
With fear and self-contempt and barren  
hope.  
Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in  
hate,  
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to  
thy scorn  
O'er mine own misery and thy vain  
revenge.



Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,  
 And moments aye divided by keen pangs  
 Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,  
 Scorn and despair, — these are mine empire;—  
 More glorious far than that which thou surveyest  
 From thine unenvied throne, O, Mighty God!  
 Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame  
 Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here  
 Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,  
 Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,  
 Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.  
 Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!  
 No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.  
 I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?  
 I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,  
 Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or calm,  
 Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread below,  
 Have its deaf waves not heard my agony?  
 Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!  
 The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears  
 Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains  
 Eat with their burning cold into my bones,  
 Heaven's winged hound, polluting from thy lips  
 His beak in poison not his own, tears up  
 My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,  
 The ghastly people of the realm of dream,  
 Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends are charged  
 To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds  
 When the rocks split and close again behind:  
 While from their loud abysses howling throng  
 The genii of the storm, urging the rage  
 Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.  
 And yet to me welcome is day and night,

Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the morn,  
 Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs  
 The leaden-colored east; for then they lead  
 The wingless, crawling hours, one among whom  
 —As some dark Priest haies the reluctant victim—  
 Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood  
 From these pale feet, which then might trample thee  
 If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.  
 Disdain! Ah no! I pity thee. What ruin  
 Will hunt thee undefended thro' the wide Heaven!  
 How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,  
 Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,  
 Not exultation, for I hate no more,  
 As then ere misery made me wise. The curse  
 Once breathed on thee I would recall.  
 Ye Mountains,  
 Whose many-voicèd Echoes, through the mist  
 Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!  
 Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,  
 Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept  
 Shuddering thro' India! Thou serenest Air,  
 Thro' which the Sun walks burning without beams!  
 And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poised wings  
 Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed abyss,  
 As thunder, louder than your own, made rock  
 The orbèd world! If then my words had power,  
 Though I am changed so that aught evil I wish  
 Is dead within; although no memory be  
 Of what is hate, let them not lose it now!  
 What was that curse? for ye all heard me speak.

*First Voice (from the Mountains)*

Thrice three hundred thousand years

O'er the Earthquake's couch we  
stood :  
Oft, as men convulsed with fears,  
We trembled in our multitude.

*Second Voice (from the Springs)*

Thunderbolts had parched our water,  
We had been stained with bitter  
blood,  
And had run mute, 'mid shrieks of  
slaughter,  
Thro' a city and a solitude.

*Third Voice (from the Air)*

I had clothed, since Earth uprose,  
Its wastes in colors not their own,  
And oft had my serene repose  
Been cloven by many a rending  
groan.

*Fourth Voice (from the Whirlwinds)*

We had soared beneath these moun-  
tains  
Unresting ages ; nor had thunder,  
Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,  
Nor any power above or under  
Ever made us mute with wonder.

*First Voice*

But never bowed our snowy crest  
As at the voice of thine unrest.

*Second Voice*

Never such a sound before  
To the Indian waves we bore.  
A pilot asleep on the howling sea  
Leaped up from the deck in agony,  
And heard, and cried, "Ah, woe is me!"  
And died as mad as the wild waves be.

*Third Voice*

By such dread words from Earth to  
Heaven  
My still realm was never riven ;  
When its wound was closed, there stood  
Darkness o'er the day like blood.

*Fourth Voice*

And we shrank back; for dreams of ruin  
To frozen caves our flight pursuing  
Made us keep silence—thus—and thus—  
Though silence is a hell to us.

*The Earth.* The tongueless Caverns  
of the craggy hills

Cried "Misery!" then; the hollow  
Heaven replied,  
"Misery!" and the Ocean's purple  
waves,  
Climbing the land, howled to the lash-  
ing winds,  
And the pale nations heard it, "Misery!"  
*Prometheus.* I hear a sound of voices :  
not the voice  
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons  
and thou  
Scorn him, without whose all-enduring  
will  
Beneath the fierce omnipotence of Jove,  
Both they and thou had vanished, like  
thin mist  
Unrolled on the morning wind. Know  
ye not me,  
The Titan? He who made his agony  
The barrier to your else all-conquering  
foe?  
Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and snow-  
fed streams,  
Now seen athwart froze vapors, deep  
below,  
Thro' whose o'ershadowing woods I  
wandered once  
With Asia, drinking life from her loved  
eyes;  
Why scorns the spirit which informs ye,  
now  
To commune with me? me alone, who  
checked,  
As one who checks a fiend-drawn  
charioteer,  
The falsehood and the force of him who  
reigns  
Supreme, and with the groans of pining  
slaves  
Fills your dim glens and liquid wilder-  
nesses:  
Why answer ye not, still? Brethren!  
*The Earth.* They dare not.  
*Prometheus.* Who dares? for I would  
hear that curse again.  
Ha, what an awful whisper rises up!  
'Tis scarce like sound; it tingles thro'  
the frame  
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it  
strike.  
Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic  
voice  
I only know that thou art moving near  
And love. How cursed I him?  
*The Earth.* How canst thou hear  
Who knowest not the language of the  
dead?  
*Prometheus.* Thou art a living spirit:  
speak as they.

*The Earth.* I dare not speak like life,  
lest Heaven's fell King  
Should hear, and link me to some wheel  
of pain  
More torturing than the one whereon I  
roll.  
Subtle thou art and good, and tho' the  
Gods  
Hear not this voice, yet thou art more  
than God  
Being wise and kind : earnestly hearken  
now.

*Prometheus.* Obscurely thro' my  
brain, like shadows dim,  
Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and thick.  
I feel  
Faint, like one mingled in entwining  
love ;  
Yet 'tis not pleasure.

*The Earth.* No, thou canst not hear ;  
Thou art immortal, and this tongue is  
known  
Only to those who die.

*Prometheus.* And what art thou,  
O, melancholy Voice ?

*The Earth.* I am the Earth,  
Thy mother ; she within whose stony  
veins,  
To the last fibre of the loftiest tree  
Whose thin leaves trembled in the  
frozen air,  
Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,  
When thou didst from her bosom, like a  
cloud,

Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy !  
And at thy voice her pining sons uplifted  
Their prostrate brows from the polluting  
dust,  
And our almighty Tyrant with fierce  
dread  
Grew pale, until his thunder chained  
thee here.

Then, see those million worlds which  
burn and roll

Around us : their inhabitants beheld  
My spherèd light wane in wide Heaven ;  
the sea

Was lifted by strange tempest, and new  
fire

From earthquake-rifted mountains of  
bright snow

Shook its portentous hair beneath  
Heaven's frown ;

Lightning and Inundation vexed the  
plains ;

Blue thistles bloomed in cities ; foodless  
toads

Within voluptuous chambers panting  
crawled ;

When Plague had fallen on man, and  
beast and worm,  
And Famine ; and black blight on herb  
and tree ;  
And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-  
grass,

Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds  
Draining their growth, for my wan  
breast was dry

With grief ; and the thin air, my breath,  
was stained

With the contagion of a mother's hate  
Breathed on her child's destroyer ; aye,  
I heard

Thy curse, the which, if thou remem-  
berest not,

Yet my innumerable seas and streams,  
Mountains, and caves, and winds, and  
yon wide air,

And the inarticulate people of the  
dead,

Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate  
In secret joy and hope those dreadful  
words

But dare not speak them.

*Prometheus.* Venerable mother !  
All else who live and suffer take from  
thee

Some comfort ; flowers, and fruits, and  
happy sounds,

And love, though fleeting ; these may  
not be mine.

But mine own words, I pray, deny me  
not.

*The Earth.* They shall be told. Ere  
Babylon was dust,

The Magus Zoroaster, my dead child,  
Met his own image walking in the gar-  
den.

That apparition, sole of men, he saw.  
For know there are two worlds of life  
and death :

One that which thou beholdest ; but the  
other

Is underneath the grave, where do in-  
habit

The shadows of all forms that think  
and live

Till death unite them and they part  
no more ;

Dreams and the light imaginings of  
men,

And all that fate creates or love desires.  
Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous  
shapes.

There thou art, and dost hang, a writh-  
ing shade,

'Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains ; all  
the gods

Are there, and all the powers of nameless worlds,  
Vast, sceptred phantoms; heroes, men,  
and beasts;  
And Demogorgon, a tremendous gloom;  
And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his throne  
Of burning gold. Son, one of these  
shall utter  
The curse which all remember. Call  
at will  
Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,  
Hades or Typhon, or what mightier Gods  
From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin  
Have sprung, and trampled on my prostrate sons.  
Ask, and they must reply: so the revenge  
Of the Supreme may sweep thro' vacant  
shades,  
As rainy wind thro' the abandoned gate  
Of a fallen palace.

*Prometheus.* Mother, let not aught  
Of that which may be evil, pass again  
My lips, or those of aught resembling me.  
*Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear!*

*Ione*

My wings are folded o'er mine ears:  
My wings are crossed o'er mine eyes:  
Yet thro' their silver shade appears,  
And thro' their lulling plumes arise,  
A Shape, a throng of sounds;  
May it be no ill to thee  
O thou of many wounds!  
Near whom, for our sweet sister's sake,  
Ever thus we watch and wake.

*Panthea*

The sound is of whirlwind underground  
Earthquake, and fire, and mountains  
cloven;  
The shape is awful like the sound,  
Clothed in dark purple, star-inwoven.  
A sceptre of pale gold  
To stay steps proud, o'er the slow  
cloud  
His veined hand doth hold.  
Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,  
Like one who does, not suffers wrong.

*Phantasm of Jupiter.* Why have  
the secret powers of this strange  
world  
Driven me, a frail and empty phantom,  
hither  
On direst storms? What unaccustomed  
sounds  
Are hovering on my lips, unlike the voice  
With which our pallid race hold ghastly  
talk

In darkness? And, proud sufferer, who  
art thou?

*Prometheus.* Tremendous Image, as  
thou art must be  
He whom thou shadowest forth. I am  
his foe,  
The Titan. Speak the words which I  
would hear,  
Although no thought inform thine  
empty voice.

*The Earth.* Listen! And tho' your  
echoes must be mute,  
Gray mountains, and old woods, and  
haunted springs,  
Prophetic caves, and isle-surrounding  
streams,  
Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot speak.

*Phantasm.* A spirit seizes me and  
speaks within:

It tears me as fire tears a thunder-cloud.  
*Panthea.* See, how he lifts his mighty  
looks, the Heaven

Darkens above.

*Ione.* He speaks! O shelter me!  
*Prometheus.* I see the curse on  
gestures proud and cold,  
And looks of firm defiance, and calm hate,  
And such despair as mocks itself with  
smiles,  
Written as on a scroll: yet speak:  
Oh, speak!

*Phantasm*

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed  
mind,  
All that thou canst inflict I bid thee  
do;  
Foul Tyrant both of Gods and Human-  
kind,  
One only being shalt thou not  
subdue.  
Rain then thy plagues upon me here,  
Ghastly disease, and frenzying fear;  
And let alternate frost and fire  
Eat into me, and be thine ire  
Lightning, and cutting hail, and legioned  
forms  
Of furies, driving by upon the wounding  
storms.

Ay, do thy worst. Thou art om-  
nipotent.

O'er all things but thyself I gave  
thee power,  
And my own will. Be thy swift  
mischiefs sent  
To blast mankind, from yon ethereal  
tower.

Let thy malignant spirit move

In darkness over those I love :  
On me and mine I imprecate  
The utmost torture of thy hate ;  
And thus devote to sleepless agony,  
This undeclining head, while thou must  
reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and Lord :  
O, thou,  
Who fillest with thy soul this world  
of woe,  
To whom all things of Earth and  
Heaven do bow  
In fear and worship : all-prevailing  
foe !  
I curse thee ! let a sufferer's curse  
Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse ;  
Till thine Infinity shall be  
A robe of envenomed agony ;  
And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain,  
To cling like burning gold round thy  
dissolving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this  
Curse  
Ill deeds, then be thou damned,  
beholding good ;  
Both infinite as is the universe,  
And thou, and thy self-torturing  
solitude.  
An awful image of calm power  
Though now thou sittest, let the hour  
Come, when thou must appear to be  
That which thou art internally.  
And after many a false and fruitless  
crime  
Scorn track thy lagging fall thro' bound-  
less space and time.

*Prometheus.* Were these my words,  
O, Parent ?

*The Earth.* They were thine.

*Prometheus.* It doth repent me :  
words are quick and vain ;  
Grief for awhile is blind, and so was  
mine.

I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

#### *The Earth*

Misery, Oh misery to me,  
That Jove at length should vanquish  
thee.  
Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,  
The Earth's rent heart shall answer  
ye.  
Howl, Spirits of the living and the dead,  
Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and  
vanquishéd.

#### *First Echo*

Lies fallen and vanquishéd !

#### *Second Echo*

Fallen and vanquishéd

#### *Ione*

Fear not : 'tis but some passing spas  
The Titan is unvanquished still.  
But see, where thro' the azure chas  
Of yon forked and snowy hill  
Trampling the slant winds on high  
With golden-sandalled feet, th  
glow  
Under plumes of purple dye,  
Like rose-ensanguined ivory,  
A Shape comes now,  
Stretching on high from his right ha  
A serpent-cinctured wand.  
*Panthea.* 'Tis Jove's world-wande  
ing herald, Mercury.

#### *Ione*

And who are those with hydra tresses  
And iron wings that climb the wind  
Whom the frowning God represses  
Like vapors steaming up behind,  
Clanging loud, an endless crowd—

#### *Panthea*

These are Jove's tempest-walkin  
hounds,  
Whom he gluts with groans and blood.  
When charioted on sulphurous cloud  
He bursts Heaven's bounds.

#### *Ione*

Are they now led, from the thin dead  
On new pangs to be fed ?

#### *Panthea*

The Titan looks as ever, firm, n  
proud.

*First Fury.* Ha ! Iscent life !

*Second Fury.* Let me but look in  
his eyes !

*Third Fury.* The hope of torturi  
him smells like a heap  
Of corpses, to a death-bird after battl

*First Fury.* Darest thou delay,  
Herald ! take cheer, Hounds  
Of Hell : what if the Son of Maia soor  
Should make us food and sport—w  
can please long

The Omnipotent ?

*Mercury.* Back to your towers  
iron,

And gnash, beside the streams of fire  
 and wail,  
 Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise!  
 and Gorgon,  
 Chimæra, and thou Sphinx, subtlest of  
 fiends  
 Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's  
 poisoned wine,  
 Unnatural love, and more unnatural  
 hate:  
 These shall perform your task.  
*First Fury.* Oh, mercy! mercy!  
 We die with our desire: drive us not  
 back!  
*Mercury.* Crouch then in silence.  
 Awful Sufferer  
 To thee unwilling, most unwillingly  
 I come, by the great Father's will driven  
 down,  
 To execute a doom of new revenge.  
 Alas! I pity thee, and hate myself  
 That I can do no more: aye from thy  
 sight  
 Returning, for a season, Heaven seems  
 Hell,  
 So thy worn form pursues me night and  
 day,  
 Smiling reproach. Wise art thou, firm  
 and good,  
 But vainly wouldst stand forth alone in  
 strife  
 Against the Omnipotent; as yon clear  
 lamps  
 That measure and divide the weary  
 years  
 From which there is no refuge, long  
 have taught  
 And long must teach. Even now thy  
 Torturer arms  
 With the strange might of unimagined  
 pains  
 The powers who scheme slow agonies in  
 Hell,  
 And my commission is to lead them  
 here,  
 Or what more subtle, foul, or savage  
 fiends  
 People the abyss, and leave them to  
 their task.  
 Be it not so! there is a secret known  
 To thee, and to none else of living  
 things,  
 Which may transfer the sceptre of wide  
 Heaven,  
 The fear of which perplexes the Su-  
 preme:  
 Clothe it in words, and bid it clasp his  
 throne  
 In intercession; bend thy soul in prayer,

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And like a suppliant in some gorgeous  
 fane,  
 Let the will kneel within thy haughty  
 heart:  
 For benefits and meek submission tame  
 The fiercest and the mightiest.  
*Prometheus.* Evil minds  
 Change good to their own nature. I  
 gave all  
 He has; and in return he chains me here  
 Years, ages, night and day: whether  
 the Sun  
 Split my parched skin, or in the moony  
 night  
 The crystal-winged snow cling round  
 my hair:  
 Whilst my beloved race is trampled  
 down  
 By his thought-executing ministers.  
 Such is the tyrant's recompense: 'tis  
 just:  
 He who is evil can receive no good;  
 And for a world bestowed, or a friend  
 lost,  
 He can feel hate, fear, shame; not gra-  
 titude:  
 He but requites me for his own mis-  
 deed.  
 Kindness to such is keen reproach, which  
 breaks  
 With bitter stings the light sleep of  
 Revenge.  
 Submission, thou dost know I cannot  
 try:  
 For what submission but that fatal word,  
 The death-seal of mankind's captivity,  
 Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,  
 Which trembles o'er his crown, would  
 he accept.  
 Or could I yield? Which yet I will not  
 yield.  
 Let others flatter Crime, where it sits  
 throned  
 In brief Omnipotence: secure are they:  
 For Justice, when triumphant, will  
 weep down  
 Pity, not punishment, on her own  
 wrongs,  
 Too much avenged by those who err.  
 I wait,  
 Enduring thus, the retributive hour  
 Which since we spake is even nearer  
 now.  
 But hark, the hell-hounds clamor: fear  
 delay:  
 Behold! Heaven lowers under thy  
 Father's frown.  
*Mercury.* Oh, that we might be  
 spared: I to inflict

And thou to suffer! Once more answer me :

Thou knowest not the period of Jove's power?

*Prometheus.* I know but this, that it must come.

*Mercury.* Alas!

Thou canst not count thy years to come of pain?

*Prometheus.* They last while Jove must reign : nor more, nor less Do I desire or fear.

*Mercury.* Yet pause, and plunge Into Eternity, where recorded time, Even all that we imagine, age on age, Seems but a point, and the reluctant mind

Flags wearily in its unending flight. Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless;

Perchance it has not numbered the slow years

Which thou must spend in torture, unreprieved?

*Prometheus.* Perchance no thought can count them, yet they pass.

*Mercury.* If thou might'st dwell among the Gods the while Lapped in voluptuous joy?

*Prometheus.* I would not quit This bleak ravine, these unrepentant pains.

*Mercury.* Alas! I wonder at, yet pity thee.

*Prometheus.* Pity the self-despising slaves of Heaven, Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene.

As light in the sun, throned : how vain is talk!

Call up the fiends.

*Ione.* O, sister, look! White fire Has cloven to the roots yon huge snow-loaded cedar;

How fearfully God's thunder howls behind!

*Mercury.* I must obey his words and thine : alas!

Most heavily remorse hangs at my heart!

*Panthea.* See where the child of Heaven, with winged feet, Runs down the slanted sunlight of the dawn.

*Ione.* Dear sister, close thy plumes over thine eyes

Lest thou behold and die : they come : they come

Blackening the birth of day with countless wings,

And hollow underneath, like death.

*First Fury.* Prometheus!

*Second Fury.* Immortal Titan!

*Third Fury.* Champion of

Heaven's slaves!

*Prometheus.* He whom some dreadful voice invokes is here,

Prometheus, the chained Titan. Horrible forms,

What and who are ye? Never yet there came

Phantasms so foul thro' monster-teeming Hell

From the all-miscreative brain of Jove ; Whilst I behold such execrable shapes.

Methinks I grow like what I contemplate,

And laugh and stare in loathsome sympathy.

*First Fury.* We are the ministers of pain, and fear,

And disappointment, and mistrust, and hate,

And clinging crime ; and as lean dogs pursue

Thro' wood and lake some struck and sobbing fawn,

We track all things that weep, and bleed, and live,

When the great King betrays them to our will.

*Prometheus.* Oh! many fearful natures in one name,

I know ye ; and these lakes and echoes know

The darkness and the clangor of your wings.

But why more hideous than your loathed selves

Gather ye up in legions from the deep?

*Second Fury.* We knew not that : Sisters, rejoice, rejoice!

*Prometheus.* Can aught exult in its deformity?

*Second Fury.* The beauty of delight makes lovers glad,

Gazing on one another : so are we.

As from the rose which the pale priestess kneels

To gather for her festal crown of flowers The aerial crimson falls, flushing her cheek,

So from our victim's destined agony The shade which is our form invests us round,

Else we are shapeless as our mother Night.

*Prometheus.* I laugh your power, and his who sent you here,

To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup of pain.

*First Fury.* Thou thinkest we will rend thee bone from bone, And nerve from nerve, working like fire within?

*Prometheus.* Pain is my element, as hate is thine;  
Ye rend me now: I care not.

*Second Fury.* Dost imagine We will but laugh into thy lidless eyes?

*Prometheus.* I weigh not what ye do, but what ye suffer, Being evil. Cruel was the power which called

You, or aught else so wretched, into light.

*Third Fury.* Thou think 'st we will live thro' thee, one by one, Like animal life, and tho' we can obscure not

The soul which burns within, that we will dwell

Beside it, like a vain loud multitude Vexing the self-content of wisest men: That we will be dread thought beneath thy brain,

And foul desire round thine astonished heart,

And blood within thy labyrinthine veins Crawling like agony.

*Prometheus.* Why, ye are thus now; Yet am I king over myself, and rule The torturing and conflicting throngs within,

As Jove rules you when Hell grows mutinous.

#### *Chorus of Furies*

From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth,  
Where the night has its grave and the morning its birth,

Come, come, come!

Oh, ye who shake hills with the scream of your mirth,

When cities sink howling in ruin; and ye

Who with wingless footsteps trample the sea,

And close upon Shipwreck and Famine's track,

Sit chattering with joy on the foodless wreck,

Come, come, come!

Leave the bed, low, cold and red,

Strewed beneath a nation dead;

Leave the hatred, as in ashes

Fire is left for future burning:

It will burst in bloodier fashion,  
When ye stir it, soon returning:  
Leave the self-contempt implanted  
In young spirits, sense-enchanted,  
Misery's yet unkindled fuel:  
Leave Hell's secrets half unchanted  
To the maniac dreamer; cruel  
More than ye can be with hate  
Is he with fear.

Come, come, come!

We are steaming up from Hell's wide gate,

And we burthen the blast of the atmosphere.

But vainly we toil till ye come here.

*Ione.* Sister, I hear the thunder of new wings.

*Panthea.* These solid mountains quiver with the sound

Even as the tremulous air: their shadows make

The space within my plumes more black than night.

#### *First Fury*

Your call was as a winged car  
Driven on whirlwinds fast and far;  
It rapt us from red gulf of war.

#### *Second Fury*

From wide cities, famine-wasted;

#### *Third Fury*

Groans half heard, and blood untasted;

#### *Fourth Fury*

Kingly conclaves stern and cold,  
Where blood with gold is bought and sold;

#### *Fifth Fury*

From the furnace, white and hot,  
In which—

#### *A Fury*

Speak not: whisper not  
I know all that ye would tell,  
But to speak might break the spell  
Which must bend the Invincible,  
The stern of thought;  
He yet defies the deepest power of Hell.

#### *Fury*

Tear the veil!

#### *Another Fury*

It is torn.

#### *Chorus*

The pale stars of the morn  
Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.



Dost thou faint, mighty Titan? We  
 laugh thee to scorn.  
 Dost thou boast the clear knowledge  
 thou waken'dst for man?  
 Then was kindled within him a thirst  
 which outran  
 Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce  
 fever,  
 Hope, love, doubt, desire, which con-  
 sume him for ever.  
 One came forth of gentle worth  
 Smiling on the sanguine earth;  
 His words outlived him, like swift  
 poison,  
 Withering up truth, peace, and pity.  
 Look! where round the wide horizon  
 Many a million-peopled city  
 Vomits smoke in the bright air.  
 Mark that outcry of despair!  
 'Tis his mild and gentle ghost  
 Wailing for the faith he kindled:  
 Look again, the flames almost  
 To a glow-worm's lamp have  
 dwindled:  
 The survivors round the embers  
 Gather in dread.  
 Joy, joy, joy!  
 Past ages crowd on thee, but each one  
 remembers,  
 And the future is dark, and the present  
 is spread  
 Like a pillow of thorns for thy slumber-  
 less head.

*Semichorus I*

Drops of bloody agony flow  
 From his white and quivering brow.  
 Grant a little respite now:  
 See a disenchanted nation  
 Springs like day from desolation;  
 To Truth its state is dedicate,  
 And Freedom leads it forth, her mate;  
 A legions band of linked brothers  
 Whom Love calls children—

*Semichorus II*

'Tis another's:  
 See how kindred murder kin:  
 'Tis the vintage time for death and sin:  
 Blood, like new wine, bubbles within;  
 Till Despair smothers  
 The struggling world, which slaves and  
 tyrants win.  
 [All the FURIES vanish, except one.  
 Ione. Hark, sister! what a low yet  
 dreadful groan.  
 Quite unsuppressed is tearing up the  
 heart

Of the good Titan, as storms tear the  
 deep,  
 And beasts hear the sea moan in inland  
 caves.  
 Darest thou observe how the fiends  
 torture him?

*Panthea.* Alas! I looked forth twice,  
 but will no more.

*Ione.* What didst thou see?

*Panthea.* A woful sight: a youth  
 With patient looks nailed to a crucifix.

*Ione.* What next?

*Panthea.* The heaven around, the  
 earth below

Was peopled with thick shapes of human  
 death,

All horrible, and wrought by human  
 hands,

And some appeared the work of human  
 hearts,

For men were slowly killed by frowns  
 and smiles:

And other sights too foul to speak and  
 live

Were wandering by. Let us not tempt  
 worse fear

By looking forth: those groans are grief  
 enough.

*Fury.* Behold an emblem: those  
 who do endure

Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and  
 chains, but heap

Thousandfold torment on themselves  
 and him.

*Prometheus.* Remit the anguish of  
 that lighted stare;

Close those wan lips; let that thorn-  
 wounded brow

Stream not with blood; it mingles with  
 thy tears!

Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and  
 death.

So thy sick throes shake not that cruci-  
 fix,

So those pale fingers play not with thy  
 gore.

O, horrible! Thy name I will not speak,  
 It hath become a curse. I see, I see

The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the  
 just,

Whom thy slaves hate for being like to  
 thee.

Some hunted by foul lies from their  
 heart's home.

An early-chosen, late-lamented home:  
 As hooded ounces cling to the driven  
 hind;

Some linked to corpses in unwholesome  
 cells:

Some—Hear I not the multitude laugh  
loud?—

Impaled in lingering fire: and mighty  
realms

Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted isles,  
Whose sons are kneaded down in com-  
mon blood

By the red light of their own burning  
homes.

*Fury.* Blood thou canst see, and fire;  
and canst hear groans;

Worse things, unheard, unseen, remain  
behind.

*Prometheus.* Worse?

*Fury.* In each human heart  
terror survives

The ruin it has gorged: the loftiest fear  
All that they would disdain to think  
were true:

Hypocrisy and custom make their minds  
The fanes of many a worship, now out-  
worn.

They dare not devise good for man's  
estate,

And yet they know not that they do not  
dare.

The good want power, but to weep  
barren tears.

The powerful goodness want: worse  
need for them.

The wise want love; and those who  
love want wisdom;

And all best things are thus confused to  
ill.

Many are strong and rich, and would  
be just,

But live among their suffering fellow-  
men

As if none felt: they know not what  
they do.

*Prometheus.* Thy words are like a  
cloud of winged snakes;

And yet I pity those they torture not.

*Fury.* Thou pitiest them? I speak  
no more! [*Vanishes.*

*Prometheus.* Ah woe!  
Ah woe! Alas! pain, pain ever, for  
ever!

I close my tearless eyes, but see more  
clear

Thy works within my woe-illumed mind,  
Thou subtle tyrant! Peace is in the  
grave.

The grave hides all things beautiful and  
good:

I am a God and cannot find it there.

Nor would I seek it: for, though dread  
revenge.

This is defeat, fierce king, not victory.

The sights with which thou torturest  
gird my soul

With new endurance, till the hour arrives  
When they shall be no types of things  
which are.

*Panthea.* Alas! what sawest thou?

*Prometheus.* There are two woes:

To speak, and to behold; thou spare  
me one.

Names are there, Nature's sacred watch-  
words, they

Were borne aloft in bright emblazonry;  
The nations thronged around, and cried  
aloud,

As with one voice, Truth, liberty, and  
love!

Suddenly fierce confusion fell from  
heaven

Among them: there was strife, deceit,  
and fear:

Tyrants rushed in, and did divide the  
spoil.

This was the shadow of the truth I saw.

*The Earth.* I felt thy torture, son,  
with such mixed joy

As pain and virtue give. To cheer thy  
state

I bid ascend those subtle and fair spirits,  
Whose homes are the dim caves of human  
thought,

And who inhabit, as birds wing the wind,  
Its world-surrounding ether: they be-  
hold

Beyond that twilight realm, as in a glase,  
The future: may they speak comfort  
to thee!

*Panthea.* Look, sister, where a troop  
of spirits gather,

Like flocks of clouds in spring's delight-  
ful weather,

Thronging in the blue air!

*Ione.* And see! more come,

Like fountain-vapors when the winds  
are dumb,

That climb up the ravine in scattered  
lines.

And, hark! is it the music of the pines?  
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

*Panthea.* 'Tis something sadder,  
sweeter far than all.

#### *Chorus of Spirits*

From unremembered ages we  
Gentle guides and guardians be  
Of heaven-oppressed mortality;  
And we breathe, and sicken not,  
The atmosphere of human thought:  
Be it dim, and dank, and gray,  
Like a storm-extinguished day,

Travelled o'er by dying gleams ;  
 Be it bright as all between  
 Cloudless skies and windless streams,  
 Silent, liquid, and serene ;  
 As the birds within the wind,  
 As the fish within the wave,  
 As the thoughts of man's own mind  
 Float thro' all above the grave ;  
 We make there our liquid lair,  
 Voyaging cloudlike and unpent  
 Thro' the boundless element :  
 Thence we bear the prophecy  
 Which begins and ends in thee !

*Ione.* More yet come, one by one :  
 the air around them  
 Looks radiant as the air around a star.

#### *First Spirit*

On a battle-trumpet's blast  
 I fled hither, fast, fast, fast,  
 'Mid the darkness upward cast.  
 From the dust of creeds outworn,  
 From the tyrant's banner torn,  
 Gathering 'round me, onward borne,  
 There was mingled many a cry—  
 Freedom ! Hope ! Death ! Victory !  
 Till they faded thro' the sky ;  
 And one sound, above, around,  
 One sound beneath, around, above,  
 Was moving ; 'twas the soul of love ;  
 'Twas the hope, the prophecy,  
 Which begins and ends in thee.

#### *Second Spirit*

A rainbow's arch stood on the sea,  
 Which rocked beneath, immovably ;  
 And the triumphant storm did flee,  
 Like a conqueror, swift and proud,  
 Between, with many a captive cloud,  
 A shapeless, dark and rapid crowd,  
 Each by lightning riven in half :  
 I heard the thunder hoarsely laugh :  
 Mighty fleets were strewn like chaff  
 And spread beneath a hell of death  
 O'er the white waters. I alit  
 On a great ship lightning-split,  
 And speeded hither on the sigh  
 Of one who gave an enemy  
 His plank, then plunged aside to die.

#### *Third Spirit*

I sate beside a sage's bed,  
 And the lamp was burning red  
 Near the book where he had fed,  
 When a Dream with plumes of flame,  
 To his pillow hovering came,  
 And I knew it was the same

Which had kindled long ago  
 Pity, eloquence, and woe ;  
 And the world awhile below  
 Wore the shade its lustre made.  
 It has borne me here as fleet  
 As Desire's lightning feet ;  
 I must ride it back ere morrow,  
 Or the sage will wake in sorrow.

#### *Fourth Spirit*

On a poet's lips I slept  
 Dreaming like a love-adept  
 In the sound his breathing kept ;  
 Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
 But feeds on the aerial kisses  
 Of shapes that haunt thought's wilder-  
 nesses.

He will watch from dawn to gloom  
 The lake-reflected sun illumine  
 The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,  
 Nor heed nor see, what things they be ;  
 But from these create he can  
 Forms more real than living man,  
 Nurslings of immortality !  
 One of these awakened me,  
 And I sped to succor thee.

#### *Ione*

Behold'at thou not two shapes from the  
 east and west  
 Come, as two doves to one beloved nest.  
 Twin nurslings of the all-sustaining air  
 On swift still wings glide down the  
 atmosphere ?  
 And, hark ! their sweet, sad voices ! 'tis  
 despair  
 Mingled with love and then dissolved  
 in sound.

*Panthea.* Canst thou speak, sister ? all  
 my words are drowned.

*Ione.* Their beauty gives me voice.  
 See how they float

On their sustaining wings of skiey grain,  
 Orange and azure deepening into gold :  
 Their soft smiles light the air like a  
 star's fire.

#### *Chorus of Spirits*

Hast thou beheld the form of love ?

#### *Fifth Spirit*

As over wide dominions  
 I sped, like some swift cloud that wings  
 the wide air's wildernesses,  
 That planet-crowned shape swept by on  
 lightning-braided pinions,  
 Scattering the liquid joy of life from his  
 ambrosial tresses :

His footsteps paved the world with light ;  
 but as I past 'twas fading,  
 And hollow Ruin yawned behind : great  
 sages bound in madness,  
 And headless patriots, and pale youths  
 who perished, unupbraiding,  
 Gleamed in the night. I wandered o'er,  
 till thou, O King of sadness,  
 Turned by thy smile the worst I saw to  
 recollected gladness.

*Sixth Spirit*

Ah, sister ! Desolation is a delicate thing :  
 It walks not on the earth, it floats not on  
 the air,  
 But treads with killing footstep, and  
 fans with silent wing  
 The tender hopes which in their hearts  
 the best and gentlest bear ;  
 Who, soothed to false repose by the  
 fanning plumes above  
 And the music-stirring motion of its  
 soft and busy feet,  
 Dream visions of aerial joy, and call the  
 monster, Love,  
 And wake, and find the shadow Pain,  
 as he whom now we greet.

*Chorus*

Tho' Ruin now Love's shadow be,  
 Following him, destroyingly,  
 On Death's white and winged steed  
 Which the fleetest cannot flee.  
 Trampling down both flower and weed,  
 Man and beast, and foul and fair,  
 Like a tempest thro' the air ;  
 Thou shalt quell this horseman grim,  
 Woundless though in heart or limb.  
*Prometheus.* Spirits ! how know ye  
 this shall be ?

*Chorus*

In the atmosphere we breathe,  
 As buds grow red when the snow-storms  
 flee,  
 From spring gathering up beneath,  
 Whose mild winds shake the elder brake,  
 And the wandering herdsmen know  
 That the white-thorn soon will blow :  
 Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,  
 When they struggle to increase,  
 Are to us as soft winds be  
 To shepherd boys, the prophecy  
 Which begins and ends in thee.  
*Ione.* Where are the Spirits fled ?  
*Panthea.* Only a sense  
 Remains of them, like the omnipotence  
 Of music, when the inspired voice and  
 lute

Languish, ere yet the responses are mute,  
 Which thro' the deep and labyrinthine  
 soul,

Like echoes thro' long caverns, wind  
 and roll.

*Prometheus.* How fair these airborne  
 shapes ! and yet I feel  
 Most vain all hope but love ; and thou  
 art far,

Asia ! who, when my being overflowed,  
 Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine  
 Which else had sunk into the thirsty  
 dust.

All things are still : alas ! how heavily  
 This quiet morning weighs upon my  
 heart ;

Tho' I should dream I could even sleep  
 with grief

If slumber were denied not. I would fain  
 Be what it is my destiny to be,  
 The savior and the strength of suffer-  
 ing man,

Or sink into the original gulf of things :  
 There is no agony, and no solace left ;  
 Earth can console, Heaven can torment  
 no more.

*Panthea.* Hast thou forgotten one  
 who watches thee  
 The cold dark night, and never sleeps  
 but when

The shadow of thy spirit falls on her ?

*Prometheus.* I said all hope was vain  
 but love : thou lovest.

*Panthea.* Deeply in truth ; but the  
 eastern star looks white,

And Asia waits in that far Indian vale  
 The scene of her sad exile ; rugged once  
 And desolate and frozen, like this ravine ;  
 But now invested with fair flowers and  
 herbs,

And haunted by sweet airs and sounds,  
 which flow

Among the woods and waters, from the  
 ether

Of her transforming presence, which  
 would fade

If it were mingled not with thine.  
 Farewell !

ACT II

SCENE I.—MORNING. A LOVELY VALE  
 IN THE INDIAN CAUCASUS. ASIA  
 alone.

*Asia.* From all the blasts of heaven  
 thou hast descended :

Yes, like a spirit, like a thought, which  
 makes

Unwonted tears throng to the horny  
eyes,  
And beatings haunt the desolated heart,  
Which should have learnt repose: thou  
hast descended  
Cradled in tempests; thou dost wake, O  
Spring!

O child of many winds! As suddenly  
Thou comest as the memory of a dream,  
Which now is sad because it hath been  
sweet;

Like genius, or like joy which riseth up  
As from the earth, clothing with golden  
clouds

The desert of our life.

This is the season, this the day, the hour;  
At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet  
sister mine.

Too long desired, too long delaying,  
come!

How like death-worms the wingless  
moments crawl!

The point of one white star is quivering  
still

Deep in the orange light of widening  
morn

Beyond the purple mountains: thro' a  
chasm

Of wind-divided mist the darker lake  
Reflects it: now it wanes: it gleams  
again

As the waves fade, and as the burning  
threads

Of woven cloud unravel in pale air:  
'Tis lost! and thro' yon peaks of cloud-  
like snow

The roseate sunlight quivers: hear I not  
The Æolian music of her sea-green  
plumes

Winnowing the crimson dawn?

[PANTHEA enters.

I feel, I see

Those eyes which burn thro' smiles that  
fade in tears,

Like stars half quenched in mists of silver  
dew.

Belovéd and most beautiful, who wearest  
The shadow of that soul by which I live,  
How late thou art! the spheréd sun had  
climbed

The sea: my heart was sick with hope,  
before

The printless air felt thy belated plumes.

Panthea. Pardon, great Sister! but  
my wings were faint

With the delight of a remembered  
dream,

As are the noontide plumes of summer  
winds

Satiate with sweet flowers. I was wont  
to sleep

Peacefully, and awake refreshed and  
calm

Before the sacred Titan's fall, and thy  
Unhappy love, had made, thro' use and  
pity,

Both love and woe familiar to my heart  
As they had grown to thine: erewhile I  
slept

Under the glaucous caverns of old Ocean  
Within dim bowers of green and purple  
moss,

Our young Ione's soft and milky arms  
Locked then, as now, behind my dark,  
moist hair,

While my shut eyes and cheek were  
pressed within

The folded depth of her life-breathing  
bosom:

But not as now, since I am made the  
wind

Which fails beneath the music that I  
bear

Of thy most wordless converse: since  
dissolved

Into the sense with which love talks, my  
rest

Was troubled and yet sweet; my waking  
hours

Too full of care and pain.

Asia. Lift up thine eyes,  
And let me read thy dream.

Panthea. As I have said  
With our sea-sister at his feet I slept.  
The mountain mists, condensing at our  
voice

Under the moon, had spread their snowy  
flakes,

From the keen ice shielding our linked  
sleep.

Then two dreams came. One, I remem-  
ber not.

But in the other his pale wound-worn  
limbs

Fell from Prometheus, and the azure  
night

Grew radiant with the glory of that form—  
Which lives unchanged within, and his  
voice fell

Like music which makes giddy the dim  
brain,

Faint with intoxication of keen joy:

"Sister of her whose footsteps pave the  
world

With loveliness—more fair than aught  
but her,

Whose shadow thou art—lift thine eyes  
on me."



I lifted them: the overpowering light  
 Of that immortal shape was shadowed  
 o'er  
 By love; which, from his soft and flow-  
 ing limbs,  
 And passion-parted lips, and keen, faint  
 eyes,  
 Steamed forth like vaporious fire; an  
 atmosphere  
 Which wrapt me in its all-dissolving  
 power,  
 As the warm ether of the morning sun  
 Wraps ere it drinks some cloud of wan-  
 dering dew.  
 I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt  
 His presence flow and mingle thro' my  
 blood  
 Till it became his life, and his grew  
 mine,  
 And I was thus absorbed, until it passed,  
 And like the vapors when the sun sinks  
 down,  
 Gathering again in drops upon the  
 pines,  
 And tremulous as they, in the deep  
 night  
 My being was condensed; and as the  
 rays  
 Of thought were slowly gathered, I could  
 hear  
 His voice, whose accents lingered ere  
 they died  
 Like footsteps of weak melody: thy  
 name  
 Among the many sounds alone I heard  
 Of what might be articulate; tho' still  
 I listened thro' the night when sound  
 was none.  
 Lone awakened then, and said to me:  
 "Canst thou divine what troubles me  
 to-night?  
 I always knew what I desired before,  
 Nor ever found delight to wish in vain.  
 But now I cannot tell thee what I seek:  
 I know not; something sweet, since it  
 is sweet  
 Even to desire; it is thy sport, false  
 sister;  
 Thou hast discovered some enchantment  
 old,  
 Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I  
 slept  
 And mingled it with thine: for when  
 just now  
 We kissed, I felt within thy parted lips  
 The sweet air that sustained me, and  
 the warmth  
 Of the life-blood, for loss of which I  
 faint,

Quivered between our intertwining  
 arms."

I answered not, for the Eastern star  
 grew pale,  
 But fled to thee.

*Asia.* Thou speakest, but thy words  
 Are as the air: I feel them not: Oh, lift  
 Thine eyes, that I may read his written  
 soul!

*Panthea.* I lift them tho' they droop  
 beneath the load  
 Of that they would express: what canst  
 thou see

But thine own fairest shadow imaged  
 there?

*Asia.* Thine eyes are like the deep,  
 blue, boundless heaven  
 Contracted to two circles underneath  
 Their long, fine lashes; dark, far, mea-  
 sureless,

Orb within orb, and line thro' line in-  
 woven.

*Panthea.* Why lookest thou as if a  
 spirit past?

*Asia.* There is a change; beyond  
 their inmost depth  
 I see a shade, a shape: 'tis He, arrayed  
 In the soft light of his own smiles, which  
 spread

Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded  
 moon.

Prometheus, it is thine! depart not yet!  
 Say not those smiles that we shall meet  
 again

Within that bright pavilion which their  
 beams

Shall build on the waste world? The  
 dream is told.

What shape is that between us? Its  
 rude hair

Roughens the wind that lifts it, its  
 regard

Is wild and quick, yet 'tis a thing of air,  
 For thro' its gray robe gleams the golden  
 dew

Whose stars the noon has quenched not  
*Dream.* Follow! Follow!

*Panthea.* It is mine other dream.

*Asia.* It disappears.

*Panthea.* It passes now into my  
 mind. Methought

As we sate here, the flower-infolding  
 buds

Burst on yon lightning-blasted almond-  
 tree.

When swift from the white Scythian  
 wilderness

A wind swept forth wrinkling the Earth  
 with frost:

I looked, and all the blossoms were  
blown down;  
But on each leaf was stamped, as the  
blue bells  
Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief,  
O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

*Asia.* As you speak, your words  
Fill, pause by pause, my own forgotten  
sleep

With shapes. Methought among the  
lawns together

We wandered, underneath the young  
gray dawn,

And multitudes of dense white fleecy  
clouds

Were wandering in thick flocks along  
the mountains

Shepherded by the slow, unwilling  
wind;

And the white dew on the new bladed  
grass,

Just piercing the dark earth, hung  
silently:

And there was more which I remember  
not:

But on the shadows of the morning  
clouds,

Athwart the purple mountain slope, was  
written

FOLLOW, O, FOLLOW! as they vanished  
by,

And on each herb, from which Heaven's  
dew had fallen,

The like was stamped, as with a wither-  
ing fire,

A wind arose among the pines; it shook  
The clinging music from their boughs,  
and then

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the fare-  
well of ghosts,

Were heard: O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW,  
FOLLOW ME!

And then I said: "Panthea, look on me."  
But in the depth of those beloved eyes  
Still I saw, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

*Echo.* Follow, follow!

*Panthea.* The crags, this clear spring  
morning, mock our voices

As they were spirit-tongued.

*Asia.* It is some being  
Around the crags. What fine clear  
sounds! O, list!

*Echoes (unseen)*

Echoes we: listen!

We cannot stay:

As dew-stars glisten

Then fade away—

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Hark! Spirits speak. The  
liquid responses  
Of their aerial tongues yet sound.

*Panthea.* I hear.

*Echoes*

O, follow, follow,

As our voice recedeth

Thro' the caverns hollow.

Where the forest spreadeth;

(*More distant*)

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

Where the wild bee never flew,

Thro' the noontide darkness deep,

By the odor-breathing sleep

Of faint night-flowers, and the waves

At the fountain-lighted caves,

While our music, wild and sweet,

Mocks thy gently falling feet,

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Shall we pursue the sound? It  
grows more faint

And distant.

*Panthea.* List! the strain floats  
nearer now.

*Echoes*

In the world unknown

Sleeps a voice unspoken;

By thy step alone

Can its rest be broken;

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* How the notes sink upon the  
ebbing wind!

*Echoes*

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

By the woodland noontide dew;

By the forests, lakes, and fountains

Thro' the many-folded mountains;

To the rents, and gulfs, and chasms,

Where the Earth reposed from spasms.

On the day when He and thou

Parted, to commingle now;

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Come, sweet Panthea, link thy  
hand in mine,

And follow, ere the voices fade away.

SCENE II.—A FOREST, INTERMINGLED  
WITH ROCKS AND CAVERNS.

ASIA and PANTHEA pass into it. Two  
young Fauns are sitting on a Rock  
listening.

*Semichorus I of Spirits*

The path thro' which that lovely twain  
Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,  
And each dark tree that ever grew,  
Is curtain'd out from Heaven's wide  
blue;  
Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,  
Can pierce its interwoven bowers,  
Nor aught, save where some cloud of  
dew,  
Drifted along the earth-creeping breeze,  
Between the trunks of the hoar trees,  
Hangs each a pearl in the pale  
flowers  
Of the green laurel, blown anew;  
And bends, and then fades silently,  
One frail and fair anemone:  
Or when some star of many a one  
That climbs and wanders thro' steep  
night,  
Has found the cleft thro' which alone  
Beams fall from high those depths upon  
Ere it is borne away, away,  
By the swift Heavens that cannot stay,  
It scatters drops of golden light,  
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:  
And the gloom divine is all around.  
And underneath is the mossy ground.

*Semichorus II*

There the voluptuous nightingales,  
Are awake thro' all the broad noon-  
day.  
When one with bliss or sadness fails,  
And thro' the windless ivy-boughs,  
Sick with sweet love, droops dying  
away  
On its mate's music-panting bosom;  
Another from the swinging blossom,  
Watching to catch the languid close  
Of the last strain, then lifts on high  
The wings of the weak melody.  
Till some new strain of feeling bear  
The song, and all the woods are mute;  
When there is heard thro' the dim air  
The rush of wings, and rising there  
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,  
Sounds overflow the listener's brain  
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

*Semichorus I*

There those enchanted eddies play  
Of echoes, music-tongued, which  
draw,  
By Demogorgon's mighty law,  
With melting rapture, or sweet awe,  
All spirits on that secret way;  
As inland boats are driven to Ocean

Down streams made strong with moun-  
tain-thaw:

And first there comes a gentle sound  
To those in talk or slumber bound  
And wakes the destined. Soft emotion  
Attracts, impels them: those who saw  
Say from the breathing earth behind  
There steams a plume-uplifting wind  
Which drives them on their path, while  
they

Believe their own swift wings and feet  
The sweet desires within obey:  
And so they float upon their way,  
Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,  
The storm of sound is driven along,  
Sucked up and hurrying: as they  
fleet

Behind, its gathering billows meet  
And to the fatal mountain bear  
Like clouds amid the yielding air.

*First Faun.* Canst thou imagine  
where those spirits live  
Which make such delicate music in the  
woods?

We haunt within the least frequented  
caves  
And closest coverts, and we know these  
wilds,

Yet never meet them, tho' we hear them  
oft:

Where may they hide themselves?

*Second Faun.* 'Tis hard to tell:  
I have heard those more skilled in  
spirits say,

The bubbles, which the enchantment of  
the sun  
Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers  
that pave

The oozy bottom of clear lakes and  
pools,  
Are the pavilions where such dwell and  
float

Under the green and golden atmosphere  
Which noontide kindles thro' the woven  
leaves;

And when these burst, and the thin fiery  
air,

The which they breathed within those  
lucent domes,

Ascends to flow like meteors thro' the  
night,

They ride on them, and rein their head-  
long speed,

And bow their burning crests, and glide  
in fire

Under the waters of the earth again.

*First Faun.* If such live thus, have  
others other lives,

Under pink blossoms or within the bells



Of meadow flowers, or folded violets  
 deep,  
 Or on their dying odors, when they  
 die,  
 Or in the sunlight of the spheréd dew ?

*Second Faun.* Ay, many more which  
 we may well divine.

But, should we stay to speak, noontide  
 would come,

And thwart Silenus find his goats un-  
 drawn,

And grudge to sing those wise and lovely  
 songs

Of fate, and chance, and God, and Chaos  
 old,

And Love, and the chained Titan's woe-  
 ful doom,

And how he shall be loosed, and make  
 the earth

One brotherhood : delightful strains  
 which cheer

Our solitary twilights, and which charm  
 To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III.—A PINNACLE OF ROCK  
 AMONG MOUNTAINS. ASIA and PAN-  
 THEA.

*Panthea.* Hither the sound has borne  
 us—to the realm

Of Demogorgon, and the mighty portal,  
 Like a volcano's meteor-breathing chasm,  
 Whence the oracular vapor is hurled up  
 Which lonely men drink wandering in  
 their youth,

And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or  
 joy,

That maddening wine of life, whose  
 dregs they drain

To deep intoxication ; and uplift,  
 Like Mænads who cry loud, Evœ ! Evœ !  
 The voice which is contagion to the  
 world.

*Asia.* Fit throne for such a power !  
 Magnificent !

How glorious art thou, Earth ! And if  
 thou be

The shadow of some spirit lovelier still,  
 Though evil stain its work, and it should  
 be

Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,  
 I could fall down and worship that and  
 thee.

Even now my heart adareth : Wonder-  
 ful !

Look, sister, ere the vapor dim thy  
 brain :

Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,  
 As a lake, paving in the morning sky,

With azure waves which burst in silver  
 light,

Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling on  
 Under the curdling winds, and islanding  
 The peak whereon we stand, midway,  
 around,

Encinctured by the dark and blooming  
 forests,

Dim twilight-lawns, and stream-illu-  
 mined caves,

And wind-enchanted shapes of wander-  
 ing mist ;

And far on high the keen sky-cleaving  
 mountains

From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling  
 The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzling  
 spray,

From some Atlantic islet scattered up,  
 Spangles the wind with lamp-like water-  
 drops.

The vale is girdled with their walls, a  
 howl

Of cataracts from their thaw-cloven  
 ravines,

Satiates the listening wind, continuous,  
 vast,

Awful as silence. Hark ! the rushing  
 snow !

The sun-awakened avalanche ! whose  
 mass,

Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered  
 there

Flake after flake, in heaven-defying  
 minds

As thought by thought is piled, till some  
 great truth

Is loosened, and the nations echo round,  
 Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains  
 now.

*Panthea.* Look how the gusty sea of  
 mist is breaking

In crimson foam, even at our feet ! it  
 rises

As Ocean at the enchantment of the  
 moon

Round foodless men wrecked on some  
 oozy isle.

*Asia.* The fragments of the cloud are  
 scattered up ;

The wind that lifts them disentwines  
 my hair ;

Its billows now sweep o'er mine eyes ;  
 my brain

Grows dizzy ; I see thin shapes within  
 the mist.

*Panthea.* A countenance with beckon-  
 ing smiles : there burns

An azure fire within its golden locks !  
 Another and another : hark ! they speak !

*Song of Spirits*

To the deep, to the deep,  
     Down, down !  
 Through the shade of sleep,  
 Through the cloudy strife  
 Of Death and of Life ;  
 Through the veil and the bar  
 Of things which seem and are  
 Even to the steps of the remotest throne,  
     Down, down !

While the sound whirls around,  
     Down, down !  
 As the fawn draws the hound,  
 As the lightning the vapor,  
 As the weak moth the taper ;  
 Death, despair ; love, sorrow ;  
 Time both ; to-day, to-morrow ;  
 As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,  
     Down, down !

Through the gray, void abysm,  
     Down, down !  
 Where the air is no prism,  
 And the moon and stars are not,  
 And the cavern-crags wear not  
 The radiance of Heaven,  
 Nor the gloom to Earth given,  
 Where there is one pervading, one alone,  
     Down, down !

In the depth of the deep,  
     Down, down !  
 Like veiled lightning asleep,  
 Like the spark nursed in embers,  
 The last look Love remembers,  
 Like a diamond, which shines  
 On the dark wealth of mines,  
 A spell is treasured but for thee alone,  
     Down, down !

We have bound thee, we guide thee ;  
     Down, down !  
 With the bright form beside thee ;  
 Resist not the weakness,  
 Such strength is in meekness  
 That the Eternal, the Immortal,  
 Must unloose through life's portal  
 The snake-like Doom coiled underneath  
     his throne  
     By that alone.

## SCENE IV.—THE CAVE OF

DEMOGORGON. ASIA and PANTHEA.

*Panthea.* What veiled form sits on  
     that ebon throne ?

*Asia.* The veil has fallen.

*Panthea.* I see a mighty darkness ]

Filling the seat of power, and rays of  
     gloom  
 Dart round, as light from the meridian  
     sun,  
 Ungazed upon and shapeless ; neither  
     limb,  
 Nor form, nor outline ; yet we feel it is  
 A living Spirit.

*Demogorgon.* Ask what thou wouldst  
     know.

*Asia.* What canst thou tell ?

*Demogorgon.* All things thou  
     dar'st demand.

*Asia.* Who made the living world ?

*Demogorgon.* God.

*Asia.* Who made all  
 That it contains ? thought, passion,  
     reason, will,  
 Imagination ?

*Demogorgon.* God : Almighty God.

*Asia.* Who made that sense which,  
     when the winds of spring  
 In rarest visitation, or the voice  
 Of one beloved heard in youth alone,  
 Fills the faint eyes with falling tears  
     which dim

The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,  
 And leaves this peopled earth a solitude  
 When it returns no more ?

*Demogorgon.* Merciful God.

*Asia.* And who made terror, madness,  
     crime, remorse,  
 Which from the links of the great chain  
     of things,

To every thought within the mind of  
     man

Sway and drag heavily, and each one  
     reels

Under the load towards the pit of  
     death ;

Abandoned hope, and love that turns to  
     hate ;

And self-contempt, bitterer to drink  
     than blood ;

Pain, whose unheeded and familiar  
     speech

Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after  
     day ;

And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell ?

*Demogorgon.* He reigns.

*Asia.* Utter his name : a world pinning  
     in pain

Asks but his name : curses shall drag  
     him down.

*Demogorgon.* He reigns.

*Asia.* I feel, I know it : who ?

*Demogorgon.* He reigns.

*Asia.* Who reigns ? There was the  
     Heaven and Earth at first,

And Light and Love ; then Saturn, from  
 whose throne  
 Time fell, an envious shadow : such the  
 state  
 Of the earth's primal spirits beneath his  
 sway,  
 As the calm joy of flowers and living  
 leaves  
 Before the wind or sun has withered  
 them  
 And semivital worms ; but he refused  
 The birthright of their being, knowledge,  
 power,  
 The skill which wields the elements,  
 the thought  
 Which pierces this dim universe like  
 light,  
 Self-empire, and the majesty of love ;  
 For thirst of which they fainted. Then  
 Prometheus  
 Gave wisdom, which is strength, to  
 Jupiter,  
 And with this law alone, "Let man be  
 free,"  
 Clothed him with the dominion of wide  
 Heaven,  
 To know nor faith, nor love, nor law ; to  
 be  
 Omnipotent but friendless, is to reign ;  
 And Jove now reigned ; for on the race  
 of man  
 First famine, and then toil, and then  
 disease.  
 Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen  
 before,  
 Fell ; and the unseasonable seasons  
 drove  
 With alternating shafts of frost and fire,  
 Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain  
 caves :  
 And in their desert hearts fierce wants  
 he sent,  
 And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle  
 Of unreal good, which levied mutual  
 war,  
 So ruining the lair wherein they raged.  
 Prometheus saw, and waked the legioned  
 hopes  
 Which sleep within folded Elysian  
 flowers,  
 Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless  
 blooms,  
 That they might hide with thin and  
 rainbow wings  
 The shape of Death ; and Love he sent  
 to bind  
 The disunited tendrils of that vine  
 Which bears the wine of life, the human  
 heart ;

And he tamed fire which, like some  
 beast of prey,  
 Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath  
 The frown of man ; and tortured to his  
 will  
 Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of  
 power,  
 And gems and poisons, and all subtlest  
 forms  
 Hidden beneath the mountains and the  
 waves.  
 He gave man speech, and speech created  
 thought,  
 Which is the measure of the universe ;  
 And Science struck the thrones of earth  
 and heaven,  
 Which shook, but fell not ; and the  
 harmonious mind  
 Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song ;  
 And music lifted up the listening spirit  
 Until it walked, exempt from mortal  
 care,  
 Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet  
 sound ;  
 And human hands first mimicked and  
 then mocked,  
 With moulded limbs more lovely than  
 its own,  
 The human form, till marble grew  
 divine ;  
 And mothers, gazing, drank the love  
 men see  
 Reflected in their race, behold, and  
 perish.  
 He told the hidden power of herbs and  
 springs,  
 And Disease drank and slept. Death  
 grew like sleep.  
 He taught the implicated orbits woven  
 Of the wide-wandering stars ; and how  
 the sun  
 Changes his lair, and by what secret-  
 spell  
 The pale moon is transformed, when her  
 broad eye  
 Gazes not on the interlunar sea :  
 He taught to rule, as life directs the  
 limbs,  
 The tempest-winged chariots of the  
 Ocean,  
 And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities  
 then  
 Were built, and through their snow-like  
 columns flowed  
 The warm winds, and the azure aeth-  
 er  
 shone,  
 And the blue sea and shadowy hills were  
 seen.  
 Such, the alleviations of his state,

Prometheus gave to man, for which he hangs  
 Withering in destined pain: but who rains down  
 Evil, the immedicable plague, which, while  
 Man looks on his creation like a God  
 And sees that it is glorious, drives him on  
 The wreck of his own will, the scorn of earth,  
 The outcast, the abandoned, the alone?  
 Not Jove: while yet his frown shook heaven, ay when  
 His adversary from adamant chains  
 Cursed him, he trembled like a slave.  
 Declare  
 Who is his master? Is he too a slave?  
*Demogorgon.* All spirits are enslaved  
 which serve things evil:  
 Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.  
*Asia.* Whom called'st thou God?  
*Demogorgon.* I spoke but as ye speak,  
 For Jove is the supreme of living things.  
*Asia.* Who is the master of the slave?  
*Demogorgon.* If the abysm  
 Could vomit forth its secrets. . . But a voice  
 Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless;  
 For what would it avail to bid thee gaze  
 On the revolving world? What to bid speak  
 Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and Change? To these  
 All things are subject but eternal Love.  
*Asia.* So much I asked before, and my heart gave  
 The response thou hast given; and of such truths  
 Each to itself must be the oracle.  
 One more demand; and do thou answer me  
 As mine own soul would answer, did it know  
 That which I ask. Prometheus shall arise  
 Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world:  
 When shall the destined hour arrive?  
*Demogorgon.* Behold!  
*Asia.* The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night  
 I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds  
 Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands  
 A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.

Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there.  
 And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:  
 Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink  
 With eager lips the wind of their own speed.  
 As if the thing they loved fled on before.  
 And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright locks  
 Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all  
 Sweep onward.  
*Demogorgon.* These are the immortal Hours,  
 Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.  
*Asia.* A spirit with a dreadful countenance  
 Checks its dark chariot by the craggy gulf.  
 Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,  
 Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou bear me? Speak!  
*Spirit.* I am the shadow of a destiny  
 More dread than is my aspect: ere yon planet  
 Has set, the darkness which ascends with me  
 Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's kingless throne.  
*Asia.* What meanest thou?  
*Panthea.* That terrible shadow floats  
 Up from its throne, as may the lurid smoke  
 Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.  
 Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly  
 Terrified: watch its path among the stars  
 Blackening the night!  
*Asia.* Thus I am answered; strange!  
*Panthea.* See, near the verge, another chariot stays;  
 An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,  
 Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim  
 Of delicate strange tracery; the young spirit  
 That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope;  
 How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light  
 Lures winged insects through the lampless air.  
*Spirit*  
 My coursers are fed with the lightning,

They drink of the whirlwind's stream,  
And when the red morning is brightning  
They bathe in the fresh sunbeam ;  
They have strength for their swiftness  
I deem,  
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire ; and their speed makes night  
kindle ;

I fear : they outstrip the Typhoon ;  
Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle  
We encircle the earth and the moon :  
We shall rest from long labors at noon :  
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

SCENE V.—THE CAR PAUSES WITHIN  
A CLOUD ON THE TOP OF A SNOWY  
MOUNTAIN. ASIA, PANTHEA, and the  
SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.

*Spirit*

On the brink of the night and the  
morning

My coursers are wont to respire ;  
But the Earth has just whispered a warn-  
ing

That their flight must be swifter than  
fire :

They shall drink the hot speed of  
desire !

*Asia.* Thou breathest on their nostrils,  
but my breath

Would give them swifter speed.

*Spirit.* Alas ! it could not.

*Panthea.* Oh Spirit ! pause, and tell  
whence is the light

Which fills the cloud ? the sun is yet  
unrisen.

*Spirit.* The sun will rise not until  
noon. Apollo

Is held in heaven by wonder ; and the  
light

Which fills this vapor, as the ærial hue  
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,  
Flows from thy mighty sister.

*Panthea.* Yes, I feel—

*Asia.* What is it with thee, sister ?  
Thou art pale.

*Panthea.* How thou art changed ! I  
dare not look on thee ;

I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure  
The radiance of thy beauty. Some good  
change

Is working in the elements, which suffer  
Thy presence thus unveiled. The Ne-  
reids tell

That on the day when the clear hyaline  
Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou didst  
stand

Within a veined shell, which floated on  
Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,  
Among the Ægean isles, and by the  
shores

Which bear thy name ; love, like the  
atmosphere

Of the sun's fire filling the living world,  
Burst from thee, and illumined earth  
and heaven

And the deep ocean and the sunless  
caves

And all that dwells within them ; till  
grief cast

Eclipse upon the soul from which it  
came :

Such art thou now ; nor is it I alone,  
Thy sister, thy companion, thine own  
chosen one,

But the whole world which seeks thy  
sympathy.

Hearst thou not sounds i' the air which  
speak the love

Of all articulate beings ? Feelest thou  
not

The inanimate winds enamored of thee ?  
List ! (*Music.*)

*Asia.* Thy words are sweeter than  
aught else but his

Whose echoes they are : yet all love is  
sweet,

Given or returned. Common as light  
is love,

And its familiar voice wearies not ever.  
Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining  
air,

It makes the reptile equal to the God :  
They who inspire it most are fortunate.

As I am now ; but those who feel it most  
Are happier still, after long sufferings,

As I shall soon become.

*Panthea.* List ! Spirits speak.

*Voice in the Air Singing*

Life of Life ! thy lips enkindle

With their love the breath between  
them ;

And thy smiles before they dwindle

Make the cold air fire ; then screen  
them

In those looks, where whoso gazes

Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light ! thy limbs are burning

Thro' the vest which seems to hide  
them ;

As the radiant lines of morning

Thro' the clouds ere they divide them ;

And this atmosphere divinest

Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others ; none beholds thee,  
But thy voice sounds low and tender  
Like the fairest, for it folds thee  
From the sight, that liquid splendor,  
And all feel, yet see thee never,  
As I feel now, lost for ever !

Lamp of Earth ! where'er thou movest  
Its dim shapes are clad with bright-  
ness,  
And the souls of whom thou lovest  
Walk upon the winds with lightness,  
Till they fail, as I am failing,  
Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing !

#### Asia

My soul is an enchanted boat,  
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth  
float  
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet  
singing ;  
And thine doth like an angel sit  
Beside a helm conducting it,  
Whilst all the winds with melody are  
ringing.  
It seems to float ever, for ever,  
Upon that many-winding river,  
Between mountains, woods, abysses,  
A paradise of wildernesses !  
Till, like one in slumber bound,  
Borne to the ocean, I float down,  
around,  
Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading  
sound :

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions  
In music's most serene dominions ;  
Catching the winds that fan that happy  
heaven.  
And we sail on, away, afar,  
Without a course, without a star.  
But, by the instinct of sweet music  
driven ;  
Till through Elysian garden islets  
By thee, most beautiful of pilots,  
Where never mortal pinnace glided,  
The boat of my desire is guided :  
Realms where the air we breathe is  
love,  
Which in the winds and on the waves  
doth move,  
Harmonizing this earth with what we  
feel above.

We have pass'd Age's icy caves,  
And Manhood's dark and tossing  
waves,  
And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to  
betray :

Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee  
Of shadow-peopled Infancy,  
Through Death and Birth, to a diviner  
day :  
A paradise of vaulted bowers,  
Lit by downward-gazing flowers,  
And watery paths that wind between  
Wildernesses calm and green,  
Peopled by shapes too bright to see,  
And rest, having beheld ; somewhat  
like thee :  
Which walk upon the sea, and chant  
melodiously !

#### ACT III

SCENE I.—HEAVEN. JUPITER *on  
his Throne* ; THETIS *and the other  
Deities assembled*.

*Jupiter*. Ye congregated powers of  
heaven, who share  
The glory and the strength of him ye  
serve,  
Rejoice ! henceforth I am omnipotent.  
All else had been subdued to me ; alone  
The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,  
Yet burns towards heaven with fierce  
reproach, and doubt,  
And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,  
Hurling up insurrection, which might  
make  
Our antique empire insecure, though  
built  
On eldest faith, and hell's coeval fear ;  
And tho' my curses thro' the pendulous  
air,  
Like snow on herbless peaks, fall flake  
by flake,  
And cling to it ; tho' under my wrath's  
night  
It climbs the crags of life, step after step,  
Which wound it, as ice wounds unsan-  
dalled feet,  
It yet remains supreme o'er misery,  
Aspiring, unrepressed, yet soon to fall :  
Even now have I begotten a strange  
wonder,  
That fatal child, the terror of the earth,  
Who waits but till the destined hour  
arrive,  
Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant  
throne  
The dreadful might of ever-living limbs  
Which clothed that awful spirit un-  
beheld,  
To redescend, and trample out the spark.  
Pour forth heaven's wine, Idæan Gany-  
mede.

And let it fill the Dædal cups like fire,  
And from the flower-inwoven soil divine  
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,  
As dew from earth under the twilight  
stars :

Drink ! be the nectar circling thro' your  
veins

The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,  
Till exultation burst in one wide voice  
Like music from Elysian winds.

And thou  
Ascend beside me, veiled in the light  
Of the desire which makes thee one with  
me,

Thetis, bright image of eternity !  
When thou didst cry, "Insufferable  
night !

God ! Spare me ! I sustain not the quick  
flames,

The penetrating presence ; all my being,  
Like him whom the Numidian seps did  
thaw

Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,  
Sinking thro' its foundations : "even then  
Two mighty spirits, mingling, made a  
third

Mightier than either, which, unbodied  
now,

Between us floats, felt, although unbe-  
held,

Waiting the incarnation, which ascends,  
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery wheels  
Grinding the winds ?) from Demogorgon's  
throne.

Victory ! victory ! Feel'st thou not, O  
world,

The earthquake of his chariot thunder-  
ing up

Olympus ?

[*The Car of the Hour arrives.*  
DEMOGORGON descends, and moves  
towards the Throne of JUPITER.

Awful shape, what art thou ?

Speak !

Demogorgon. Eternity. Demand no  
direr name.

Descend, and follow me down the abyss.  
I am thy child, as thou wert Saturn's  
child ;

Mightier than thee : and we must dwell  
together

Henceforth in darkness. Lift thy light-  
nings not.

The tyranny of heaven none may retain,  
Or reassume, or hold, succeeding thee :  
Yet if thou wilt, as 'tis the destiny  
Of trodden worms to writhe till they  
are dead.

Put forth thy might.

*Jupiter.* Detested prodigy !  
Even thus beneath the deep Titanian  
prisons

I trample thee ! thou lingerest ?

Mercy ! mercy !  
No pity, no release, no respite ! Oh,  
That thou wouldst make mine enemy  
my judge,

Even where he hangs, seared by my  
long revenge,

On Caucasus ! he would not doom me  
thus.

Gentle, and just, and dreadless, is he  
not

The monarch of the world ? What then  
art thou ?

No refuge ! no appeal !

Sink with me then,  
We too will sink on the wide waves of  
ruin,

Even as a vulture and a snake outspent  
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,  
Into a shoreless sea. Let hell unlock  
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire.  
And whelm on them into the bottomless  
void

This desolated world, and thee, and me.  
The conqueror and the conquered, and  
the wreck

Of that for which they combated.

Ai ! Ai !  
The elements obey me not. I sink  
Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down.  
And, like a cloud, mine enemy above  
Darkens my fall with victory ! Ai, Ai !

SCENE II.—THE MOUTH OF A GREAT  
RIVER IN THE ISLAND ATLANTIS. OCEAN  
is discovered reclining near the Shore ;  
APOLLO stands beside him.

*Ocean.* He fell, thou sayest, beneath  
his conqueror's frown ?

*Apollo.* Aye, when the strife was  
ended which made dim

The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars.  
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven  
With sanguine light, through the thick  
ragged skirts

Of the victorious darkness, as he fell :  
Like the last glare of day's red agony.  
Which, from a rent among the fiery  
clouds,

Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled  
deep.

*Ocean.* He sunk to the abyss ? To the  
dark void ?

*Apollo.* An eagle so caught in some  
bursting cloud

On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings  
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his  
eyes

Which gazed on the undazzling sun,  
now blinded

By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail

Beats on his struggling form, which  
sinks at length

Prone, and the aerial ice clings over it.

*Ocean.* Henceforth the fields of  
Heaven-reflecting sea

Which are my realm, will heave, unstained with blood,

Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains  
of corn

Swayed by the summer air; my streams  
will flow

Round many-peopled continents, and  
round

Fortunate isles; and from their glassy  
thrones

Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs  
shall mark

The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see

The floating bark of the light-laden  
moon

With that white star, its sightless pilot's  
crest,

Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing  
sea;

Tracking their path no more by blood  
and groans,

And desolation, and the mingled voice  
Of slavery and command! but by the  
light

Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating  
odors,

And music soft, and mild, free, gentle  
voices,

And sweetest music, such as spirits love.

*Apollo.* And I shall gaze not on the  
deeds which make

My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse  
Darkens the sphere I guide; but list, I  
hear

The small, clear, silver lute of the young  
Spirit

That sits i' the morning star.

*Ocean.* Thou must away;  
Thy steeds will pause at even, till when  
farewell:

The loud deep calls me home even now  
to feed it

With azure calm out of the emerald  
urns

Which stand for ever full beside my  
throne.

Behold the Nereids under the green sea,

Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-  
like stream,

Their white arms lifted o'er their stream-  
ing hair

With garlands pied and starry sea-flower  
crowns,

Hastening to grace their mighty sister's  
joy. [*A sound of waves is heard.*]

It is the unpastured sea hungering for  
calm.

Peace, monster; I come now. Fare-  
well.

*Apollo.*

Farewell.

SCENE III.—CAUCASUS. PROMETHEUS,  
HERCULES, IONE, *the EARTH*, SPIR-  
ITS, ASIA, and PANTHEA, *borne  
in the Car with the SPIRIT OF THE  
HOUR*. HERCULES *unbinds* PROME-  
THEUS, *who descends*.

*Hercules.* Most glorious among  
spirits, thus doth strength

To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering  
love,

And thee, who art the form they ani-  
mate,

Minister like a slave.

*Prometheus.* Thy gentle words  
Are sweeter even than freedom long  
desired

And long delayed.

Asia, thou light of life,  
Shadow of beauty unbeheld: and ye,

Fair sister nymphs, who made long  
years of pain

Sweet to remember, thro' your love and  
care:

Henceforth we will not part. There is  
a cave,

All overgrown with trailing odorous  
plants,

Which curtain out the day with leaves  
and flowers,

And paved with veined emerald, and a  
fountain

Leaps in the midst with an awakening  
sound.

From its curved roof the mountain's  
frozen tears

Like snow, or silver, or long diamond  
spires,

Hang downward, raining forth a doubt-  
ful light:

And there is heard the ever-moving air,  
Whispering without from tree to tree,

and birds,  
And bees; and all around are mossy  
seats,



And the rough walls are clothed with  
 long soft grass ;  
 A simple dwelling, which shall be our  
 own ;  
 Where we will sit and talk of time and  
 change,  
 As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves  
 unchanged.  
 What can hide man from mutability ?  
 And if ye sigh, then I will smile ; and  
 thou,  
 Ione, shalt chant fragments of sea-  
 music,  
 Until I weep, when ye shall smile away  
 The tears she brought, which yet were  
 sweet to shed.  
 We will entangle buds and flowers and  
 beams  
 Which twinkle on the fountain's brim,  
 and make  
 Strange combinations out of common  
 things,  
 Like human babes in their brief inno-  
 cence ;  
 And we will search, with looks and  
 words of love,  
 For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than  
 the last,  
 Our unexhausted spirits ; and like lutes  
 Touched by the skill of the enamored  
 wind,  
 Weave harmonies divine, yet ever new,  
 From difference sweet where discord  
 cannot be ;  
 And hither come, sped on the charmed  
 winds,  
 Which meet from all the points of  
 heaven, as bees  
 From every flower ærial Enna feeds,  
 At their known island-homes in Himera,  
 The echoes of the human world, which  
 tell  
 Of the low voice of love, almost un-  
 heard,  
 And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain,  
 and music,  
 Itself the echo of the heart, and all  
 That tempers or improves man's life,  
 now free ;  
 And lovely apparitions, dim at first,  
 Then radiant, as the mind, arising  
 bright  
 From the embrace of beauty, whence  
 the forms  
 Of which these are the phantoms, cast  
 on them  
 The gathered rays which are reality,  
 Shall visit us, the progeny immortal  
 Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,

And arts, tho' unimagined, yet to be.  
 The wandering voices and the shadows  
 these  
 Of all that man becomes, the mediators  
 Of that best worship love, by him and us  
 Given and returned ; swift shapes and  
 sounds, which grow  
 More fair and soft as man grows wise  
 and kind,  
 And, veil by veil, evil and error fall :  
 Such virtue has the cave and place  
 around.  
*[Turning to the Spirit of the Hour.*  
 For thee, fair Spirit, one toil remains.  
 Ione,  
 Give her that curvèd shell, which Pro-  
 teus old  
 Made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing  
 within it  
 A voice to be accomplished, and which  
 thou  
 Didst hide in grass under the hollow  
 rock.  
*Ione.* Thou most desired Hour, more  
 loved and lovely  
 Than all thy sisters, this is the mystic  
 shell ;  
 See the pale azure fading into silver  
 Lining it with a soft yet glowing light :  
 Looks it not like lulled music sleeping  
 there ?  
*Spirit.* It seems in truth the fairest  
 shell of Ocean :  
 Its sounds must be at once both sweet  
 and strange.  
*Prometheus.* Go, borne over the  
 cities of mankind  
 On whirlwind-footed coursers : once  
 again  
 Outspeed the sun around the orbèd world :  
 And as thy chariot cleaves the kindling  
 air,  
 Thou breathe into the many-folded shell-  
 Loosening its mighty music ; it shall be  
 As thunder mingled with clear echoes :  
 then  
 Return ; and thou shalt dwell beside our  
 cave.  
 And thou, O, Mother Earth !—  
*The Earth.* I hear, I feel ;  
 Thy lips are on me, and thy touch runs  
 down  
 Even to the adamantine central gloom  
 Along these marble nerves ; 'tis life, 'tis  
 joy,  
 And through my withered, old and icy  
 frame  
 The warmth of an immortal youth shoots  
 down

**Circling.** Henceforth the many children  
fair

**Folded** in my sustaining arms ; all  
plants,

**And** creeping forms, and insects rain-  
bow-winged,

**And** birds, and beasts, and fish, and  
human shapes,

**Which** drew disease and pain from my  
wan bosom,

**Draining** the poison of despair, shall  
take

**And** interchange sweet nutriment ; to me  
Shall they become like sister antelopes

**By one** fair dam, snow-white and swift  
as wind,

**Nursed** among lilies near a brimming  
stream.

**The** dew-mists of my sunless sleep shall  
float

**Under** the stars like balm : night-folded  
flowers

**Shall** suck unwithering hues in their  
repose :

**And** men and beasts in happy dreams  
shall gather

**Strength** for the coming day, and all its  
joy :

**And** death shall be the last embrace of  
her

**Who** takes the life she gave, even as a  
mother

**Folding** her child, says, " Leave me not  
again."

*Asia.* Oh, mother ! wherefore speak  
the name of death ?

**Cease** they to love, and move, and  
breathe, and speak,

**Who** die ?

*The Earth.* It would avail not to  
reply :

**Thou** art immortal, and this tongue is  
known

**But** to the uncommunicating dead.

**Death** is the veil which those who live  
call life :

**They** sleep, and it is lifted : and mean-  
while

**In** mild variety the seasons mild  
**With** rainbow-skirted showers, and  
odorous winds,

**And** long blue meteors cleansing the  
dull night,

**And** the life-kindling shafts of the keen  
sun's

**All-piercing** bow, and the dew-mingled  
rain

**Of** the calm moonbeams, a soft influence  
mild,

Shall clothe the forests and the fields,  
ay, even

The crag-built deserts of the barren deep,  
With ever-living leaves, and fruits, and  
flowers.

**And** thou ! There is a cavern where my  
spirit

**Was** panted forth in anguish whilst thy  
pain

**Made** my heart mad, and those who did  
inhale it

**Became** mad too, and built a temple  
there,

**And** spoke, and were oracular, and lured  
The erring nations round to mutual war,

**And** faithless faith, such as Jove kept  
with thee ;

**Which** breath now rises, as amongst tall  
weeds

**A** violet's exhalation, and it fills  
With a serener light and crimson air

**Intense,** yet soft, the rocks and woods  
around ;

**It** feeds the quick-growth of the serpent  
vine,

**And** the dark linked ivy tangling wild,  
And budding, blown, or odor-faded  
blooms

**Which** star the winds with points of  
colored light.

**As** they rain thro' them, and bright  
golden globes

**Of** fruit, suspended in their own green  
heaven,

**And** thro' their veined leaves and amber  
stems

**The** flowers whose purple and trans-  
lucid bowls

**Stand** ever mantling with aerial dew,  
The drink of spirits : and it circles  
round,

**Like** the soft waving wings of noonday  
dreams,

**Inspiring** calm and happy thoughts, like  
mine,

**Now** thou art thus restored. This cave  
is thine.

**Arise !** Appear !

[*A Spirit rises in the likeness of  
a winged child.*

This is my torch-bearer ;

**Who** let his lamp out in old time with  
gazing

**On** eyes from which he kindled it anew  
With love, which is as fire, sweet

**daughter** mine,

**For** such is that within thine own. Run,  
wayward,

**And** guide this company beyond the peak

Of Bacchic Nyssa, Mænad-haunted mountain,  
And beyond Indus and its tribute rivers,  
Trampling the torrent streams and glassy lakes

With feet unwet, unwearied, undelaying,  
And up the green ravine, across the vale,  
Beside the windless and crystalline pool,  
Where ever lies, on unersasing waves,  
The image of a temple, built above,  
Distinct with column, arch, and architrave.

And palm-like capital, and over-wrought  
And populous most with living imagery,  
Praxitelean shapes, whose marble smiles  
Fill the hushed air with everlasting love.  
It is deserted now, but once it bore  
Thy name, Prometheus; there the emulous youths

Bore to thy honor thro' the divine gloom  
The lamp which was thine emblem;  
even as those

Who bear the untransmitted torch of hope

Into the grave, across the night of life.  
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly  
To this far goal of Time. Depart, farewell.

Beside that temple is the destined cave.

SCENE IV. A FOREST. IN THE BACKGROUND A CAVE, PROMETHEUS, ASIA, PANTHEA, IONE, and the SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.

*Ione.* Sister, it is not earthly: how it glides  
Under the leaves! how on its head there burns

A light, like a green star, whose emerald beams

Are twined with its fair hair! how, as it moves.

The splendor drops in flakes upon the grass!

Knowest thou it?

*Panthea.* It is the delicate spirit  
That guides the earth thro' heaven.  
From afar

The populous constellations call that light

The loveliest of the planets; and sometimes

It floats along the spray of the salt sea,  
Or makes its chariot of a foggy cloud,  
Or walks thro' fields or cities while men sleep,

Or o'er the mountain tops, or down the rivers,

Or thro' the green waste wilderness, as now,

Wondering at all it sees. Before Jove reigned

It loved our sister Asia, and it came  
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid light

Out of her eyes, for which it said it thirsted

As one bit by a dipsas, and with her  
It made its childish confidence, and told her

All it had known or seen, for it saw much.

Yet idly reasoned what it saw; and called her—

For whence it sprung it knew not, nor do I—

Mother, dear mother.

*The Spirit of the Earth (running to Asia).* Mother, dearest mother;

May I then talk with thee as I was wont?

May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms.

After thy looks have made them tired of joy?

May I then play beside thee the long noons.

When work is none in the bright silent air?

*Asia.* I love thee, gentlest being, and henceforth

Can cherish thee unenvied: speak. I pray:

Thy simple talk once solaced, now delights.

*Spirit of the Earth.* Mother, I am grown wiser, though a child

Cannot be wise like thee, within this day;

And happier too; happier and wiser both.  
Thou knowest that toads, and snakes,

and loathly worms.

And venomous and malicious beasts, and boughs

That bore ill berries in the woods, were ever

An hindrance to my walks o'er the green world:

And that, among the haunts of humankind,

Hard-featured men, or with proud, angry looks,  
Or cold, staid gait, or false and hollow smiles,

Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignorance,  
Or other such foul masks, with which ill thoughts

Hide that fair being whom we spirits  
 call man ;  
 And women too, ugliest of all things  
 evil.  
 (Tho' fair, even in a world where thou  
 art fair.  
 When good and kind, free and sincere  
 like thee).  
 When false or frowning made me sick  
 at heart  
 To pass them, tho' they slept, and I un-  
 seen.  
 Well, my path lately lay thro' a great  
 city  
 Into the woody hills surrounding it :  
 A sentinel was sleeping at the gate :  
 When there was heard a sound, so loud  
 it shook  
 The towers amid the moonlight, yet  
 more sweet  
 Than any voice but thine, sweetest of  
 all :  
 A long, long sound, as it would never  
 end :  
 And all the inhabitants leapt suddenly  
 Out of their rest, and gathered in the  
 streets,  
 Looking in wonder up to Heaven, while  
 yet  
 The music pealed along. I hid myself  
 Within a fountain in the public square,  
 Where I lay like the reflex of the moon  
 Seen in a wave under green leaves ; and  
 soon  
 Those ugly human shapes and visages  
 Of which I spoke as having wrought me  
 pain,  
 Passed floating thro' the air, and fading  
 still  
 Into the winds that scattered them ; and  
 those  
 From whom they passed seemed mild  
 and lovely forms  
 After some foul disguise had fallen, and  
 all  
 Were somewhat changed, and after brief  
 surprise  
 And greetings of delighted wonder, all  
 Went to their sleep again : and when  
 the dawn  
 Came, would'st thou think that toads,  
 and snakes, and efts,  
 Could e'er be beautiful ? yet so they were,  
 And that with little change of shape or  
 hue :  
 All things had put their evil nature off ;  
 I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake  
 Upon a drooping bough with night-  
 shade twined,

I saw two azure halcyons clinging down-  
 ward  
 And thinning one bright bunch of  
 amber berries,  
 With quick long beaks, and in the deep  
 there lay  
 Those lovely forms imaged as in a sky :  
 So, with my thoughts full of these happy  
 changes,  
 We meet again, the happiest change of  
 all.  
*Asia.* And never will we part, till  
 thy chaste sister  
 Who guides the frozen and inconstant  
 moon  
 Will look on thy more warm and equal  
 light  
 Till her heart thaw like flakes of April  
 snow  
 And love thee.  
*Spirit of the Earth.* What ; as  
 Asia loves Prometheus ?  
*Asia.* Peace, wanton, thou art yet  
 not old enough.  
 Think ye by gazing on each other's eyes  
 To multiply your lovely selves, and fill  
 With spheréd fires the interlunar air ?  
*Spirit of the Earth.* Nay, mother,  
 while my sister trims her lamp  
 'Tis hard I should go darkling.  
*Asia.* Listen ; look !  
*The SPIRIT OF THE HOUR enters.*  
*Prometheus.* We feel what thou hast  
 heard and seen ; yet speak.  
*Spirit of the Hour.* Soon as the sound  
 had ceased whose thunder filled  
 The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,  
 There was a change : the impalpable  
 thin air  
 And the all-circling sunlight were trans-  
 formed,  
 As if the sense of love dissolved in them  
 Had folded itself round the spheréd  
 world.  
 My vision then grew clear, and I could  
 see  
 Into the mysteries of the universe :  
 Dizzy as with delight I floated down ;  
 Winnowing the lightsome air with lan-  
 guid plumes,  
 My coursers sought their birthplace in  
 the sun,  
 Where they henceforth will live exempt  
 from toil  
 Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire ;  
 And where my moonlike car will stand  
 within  
 A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms

Of thee, and Asia, and the Earth, and  
me,  
And you fair nymphs looking the love  
we feel,—  
In memory of the tidings it has borne,—  
Beneath a dome fretted with graven  
flowers,  
Poised on twelve columns of resplendent  
stone,  
And open to the bright and liquid sky.  
Yoked to it by an amphisbenic snake  
The likeness of those winged steeds will  
mock  
The flight from which they find repose.  
Alas,  
Whither has wandered now my partial  
tongue  
When all remains untold which ye  
would hear?  
As I have said I floated to the earth:  
It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss  
To move, to breathe, to be; I wander-  
ing went  
Among the haunts and dwellings of  
mankind,  
And first was disappointed not to see  
Such mighty change as I had felt within  
Expressed in outward things; but soon  
I looked,  
And behold, thrones were kingless, and  
men walked  
One with the other even as spirits do,  
None fawned, none trampled; hate,  
disdain, or fear,  
Self-love or self-contempt, on human  
brows,  
No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of  
hell,  
"All hope abandon ye who enter here;"  
None frowned, none trembled, none  
with eager fear  
Gazed on another's eye of cold command,  
Until the subject of the tyrant's will  
Became, worse fate, the abject of his  
own.  
Which spurred him, like an outspent  
horse, to death.  
None wrought his lips in truth-entang-  
ling lines  
Which smiled the lie his tongue dis-  
dained to speak;  
None, with firm sneer, trod out in his  
own heart  
The sparks of love and hope till there  
remained  
Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed.  
And the wretch crept a vampire among  
men,  
Infecting all with his own hideous ill;

None talked that common, false, cold,  
hollow talk  
Which makes the heart deny the *yes* it  
breathes.  
Yet question that unmeant hypocrisy  
With such a self-mistrust as has no  
name.  
And women, too, frank, beautiful, and  
kind  
As the free heaven which rains fresh  
light and dew  
On the wide earth, passed; gentle radi-  
ant forms,  
From custom's evil taint exempt and  
pure;  
Speaking the wisdom once they could  
not think,  
Looking emotions once they feared to  
feel,  
And changed to all which once they  
dared not be,  
Yet being now, made earth like heaven;  
nor pride,  
Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill shame.  
The bitterest of those drops of *treasured*  
gall,  
Spoilt the sweet taste of the *nepenthe*,  
love.  
Thrones, altars, judgment-seats, and  
prisons, wherein,  
And beside which, by wretched men  
were borne  
Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains,  
and tomes  
Of reasoned wrong, glozed on by ignor-  
ance,  
Were like those monstrous and barbaric  
shapes,  
The ghosts of a no more remembered  
fame,  
Which, from their unworn obelisks,  
look forth  
In triumph o'er the palaces and tombs  
Of those who were their conquerors:  
mouldering round  
Those imaged to the pride of kings and  
priests.  
A dark yet mighty faith, a power as  
wide  
As is the world it wasted, and are now  
But an astonishment; even so the tools  
And emblems of its last captivity,  
Amid the dwellings of the peopled  
earth,  
Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregarded  
now.  
And those foul shapes, abhorred by god  
and man,



Which, under many a name and many a  
form,  
Strange, savage, ghastly, dark and  
execrable,  
Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world ;  
And which the nations, panic-stricken,  
served  
With blood, and hearts broken by long  
hope, and love  
Dragged to his altars soiled and garland-  
less,  
And slain among men's unreclaiming  
tears,  
Flattering the thing they feared, which  
fear was hate,  
Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their  
abandoned shrines :  
The painted veil, by those who were,  
called life,  
Which mimicked, as with colors idly  
spread,  
All men believed and hoped, is torn  
aside ;  
The loathsome mask has fallen, the man  
remains  
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but  
man  
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nation-  
less,  
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the  
king  
Over himself ; just, gentle, wise : but  
man  
Passionless ; no, yet free from guilt or  
pain,  
Which were, for his will made or suffered  
them,  
Nor yet exempt, tho' ruling them like  
slaves,  
From chance, and death, and mutability,  
The clogs of that which else might over-  
soar  
The loftiest star of unascended heaven,  
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

## ACT IV

**SCENE, A PART OF THE FOREST NEAR THE  
CAVE OF PROMETHEUS. PANTHEA  
and IONE are sleeping : they awaken  
gradually during the first Song.**

*Voice of unseen Spirits*

The pale stars are gone !  
For the sun, their swift shepherd,  
To their folds them compelling,  
In the depths of the dawn,  
Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array, and  
they flee

Beyond his blue dwelling,  
As fawns flee the leopard.  
But where are ye ?

*A Train of dark Forms and Shadows  
passes by confusedly, singing.*

Here, oh, here :  
We bear the bier  
Of the Father of many a cancelled year !  
Spectres we  
Of the dead Hours be,  
We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.

Strew, oh, strew  
Hair, not yew !  
Wet the dusty pall with tears, not dew !  
Be the faded flowers  
Of Death's bare bowers  
Spread on the corpse of the King of  
Hours !

Haste, oh, haste !  
As shades are chased,  
Trembling, by day, from heaven's blue  
waste.

We melt away,  
Like dissolving spray,  
From the children of a diviner day,  
With the lullaby  
Of winds that die  
On the bosom of their own harmony !

*Ione*

What dark forms were they ?

*Panthea*

The past Hours weak and gray,  
With the spoil which their toil  
Raked together  
From the conquest but One could  
foil.

*Ione*

Have they past ?

*Panthea*

They have past ;  
They outspeeded the blast,  
While 'tis said, they are fled :

*Ione*

Whither, oh, whither ?

*Panthea*

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

*Voice of unseen Spirits*

Bright clouds float in heaven,  
Dew-stars gleam on earth,  
Waves assemble on ocean,  
They are gathered and driven

By the storm of delight, by the panic of  
glee!

They shake with emotion,  
They dance in their mirth.  
But where are ye?

The pine boughs are singing  
Old songs with new gladness,  
The billows and fountains  
Fresh music are flinging,  
Like the notes of a spirit from land and  
from sea;  
The storms mock the mountains  
With the thunder of gladness.  
But where are ye?

*Ione.* What charioteers are these?

*Panthea.* Where are their  
chariots?

*Semichorus of Hours*

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of  
Earth  
Have drawn back the figured curtain  
of sleep  
Which covered our being and darkened  
our birth  
In the deep.

*A Voice*

In the deep?

*Semichorus II*

Oh, below the deep.

*Semichorus I*

An hundred ages we had been kept  
Cradled in visions of hate and care,  
And each one who waked as his brother  
slept,  
Found the truth—

*Semichorus II*

Worse than his visions were!

*Semichorus I*

We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep:  
We have known the voice of Love in  
dreams,  
We have felt the wand of Power, and  
leap—

*Semichorus II*

As the billows leap in the morning  
beams!

*Chorus*

Weave the dance on the floor of the  
breeze,  
Pierce with song heaven's silent light,

Enchant the day that too swiftly flees,  
To check its flight ere the cave of  
night.

Once the hungry Hours were hounds  
Which chased the day like a bleeding  
deer,  
And it limped and stumbled with many  
wounds  
Through the nightly dells of the  
desert year.

But now, oh weave the mystic measure  
Of music, and dance, and shapes of  
light,  
Let the Hours, and the spirits of might  
and pleasure.  
Like the clouds and sunbeams, unite.

*A Voice*

Unite!

*Panthea.* See, where the Spirits of  
the human mind  
Wrapt in sweet sounds, as in bright veils,  
approach.

*Chorus of Spirits*

We join the throng  
Of the dance and the song,  
By the whirlwind of gladness borne  
along;  
As the flying-fish leap  
From the Indian deep.  
And mix with the sea-birds, half asleep.

*Chorus of Hours*

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet.  
For sandals of lightning are on your  
feet.  
And your wings are soft and swift as  
thought,  
And your eyes are as love which is veiled  
not?

*Chorus of Spirits*

We come from the mind  
Of human kind  
Which was late so dusk, and obscene,  
and blind.  
Now 'tis an ocean  
Of clear emotion,  
A heaven of serene and mighty motion;

From that deep abyss  
Of wonder and bliss,  
Whose caverns are crystal palaces;  
From those skiey towers  
Where Thought's crowned powers  
Sit watching your dance, ye happy  
Hours!

From the dim recesses  
Of woven caresses,  
Where lovers catch ye by your loose  
tresses;  
From the azure isles,  
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,  
Delaying your ships with her siren  
wiles.

From the temples high  
Of Man's ear and eye,  
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy;  
From the murmurings  
Of the unsealed springs  
Where Science bedews his Dædal wings.

Years after years,  
Through blood, and tears,  
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes,  
and fears;  
We waded and flew,  
And the islets were few  
Where the bud-blighted flowers of hap-  
piness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,  
Are sandalled with calm,  
And the dew of our wings is a rain of  
balm;  
And, beyond our eyes,  
The human love lies  
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise.

*Chorus of Spirits and Hours*

Then weave the web of the mystic  
measure;  
From the depths of the sky and the ends  
of the earth,  
Come, swift Spirits of might and of  
pleasure,  
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,  
As the waves of a thousand streams  
rush by  
To an ocean of splendor and harmony!

*Chorus of Spirits*

Our spoil is won,  
Our task is done,  
We are free to dive, or soar, or run;  
Beyond and around,  
Or within the bound  
Which clips the world with darkness  
round.

We'll pass the eyes  
Of the starry skies  
Into the hoar deep to colonise:  
Death, Chaos, and Night,

From the sound of our flight,  
Shall flee, like mist from a tempest's  
might.

And Earth, Air, and Light,  
And the Spirit of Might,  
Which drives round the stars in their  
fiery flight;  
And Love, Thought, and Breath,  
The powers that quell Death,  
Wherever we soar shall assemble be-  
neath.

And our singing shall build  
In the void's loose field  
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to  
wield;

We will take our plan  
From the new world of man,  
And our work shall be called the Pro-  
methean.

*Chorus of Hours*

Break the dance, and scatter the song;  
Let some depart, and some remain.

*Semichorus I*

We, beyond heaven, are driven along!

*Semichorus II*

Us the enchantments of earth retain:

*Semichorus I*

Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and free,  
With the Spirits which build a new earth  
and sea,  
And a heaven where yet heaven could  
never be.

*Semichorus II*

Solemn, and slow, and serene, and bright,  
Leading the Day and outspeeding the  
Night,  
With the powers of a world of perfect  
light.

*Semichorus I*

We whirl, singing loud, round the gather-  
ing sphere,  
Till the trees, and the beasts, and the  
clouds appear  
From its chaos made calm by love, not  
fear.

*Semichorus II*

We encircle the ocean and mountains of  
earth,  
And the happy forms of its death and  
birth



Change to the music of our sweet mirth.

*Chorus of Hours and Spirits*

Break the dance, and scatter the song,  
Let some depart, and some remain,  
Wherever we fly we lead along  
In leashes, like starbeams, soft yet strong,  
The clouds that are heavy with love's sweet rain.

*Panthea.* Ha! they are gone!

*Ione.* Yet feel you no delight  
From the past sweetness?

*Panthea.* As the bare green hill  
When some soft cloud vanishes into rain,  
Laughs with a thousand drops of sunny water

To the unpavilioned sky!

*Ione.* Even whilst we speak  
New notes arise. What is that awful sound?

*Panthea.* 'Tis the deep music of the rolling world  
Kindling within the strings of the waved air,

Æolian modulations.

*Ione.* Listen too,  
How every pause is filled with under notes,  
Clear, silver, icy, keen, awakening tones,  
Which pierce the sense, and live within the soul,  
As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal air

And gaze upon themselves within the sea.

*Panthea.* But see where through two openings in the forest  
Which hanging branches overcanopy,  
And where two runnels of a rivulet,  
Between the close moss violet-inwoven,  
Have made their path of melody, like sisters

Who part with sighs that they may meet in smiles,

Turning their dear disunion to an isle  
Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad thoughts;

Two visions of strange radiance float upon

The ocean-like enchantment of strong sound,

Which flows intenser, keener, deeper yet  
Under the ground and through the windless air.

*Ione.* I see a chariotlike that thinnest boat,

In which the mother of the months is borne

By ebbing night into her western cave,  
When she upsprings from interlunar dreams,

O'er which is curved an orblike canopy  
Of gentle darkness, and the hills and woods

Distinctly seen through that dusk airy veil.

Regard like shapes in an enchanter's glass;

Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and gold,

Such as the genii of the thunderstorm

Pile on the floor of the illumined sea

When the sun rushes under it; they roll  
And move and grow as with an inward wind;

Within it sits a winged infant, white

Its countenance, like the whiteness of bright snow,

Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,  
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind flowing folds

Of its white robe, woof of ethereal pearl.  
Its hair is white, the brightness of white light

Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes are heavens

Of liquid darkness, which the Deity  
Within seems pouring, as a storm is poured

From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy lashes,

Tempering the cold and radiant air around,

With fire that is not brightness: in its hand

It sways a quivering moonbeam, from whose point

A guiding power directs the chariot's prow

Over its wheelèd clouds, which as they roll

Over the grass, and flowers, and waves, wake sounds,

Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.

*Panthea.* And from the other opening in the wood

Rushes, with loud and whirlwind harmony,

A sphere, which is as many thousand spheres,

Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass  
Flow, as through empty space, music and light:

Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,

Purple and azure, white, and green, and golden,

Sphere within sphere ; and every space  
 between  
 Peopled with unimaginable shapes,  
 Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lamp-  
 less deep,  
 Yet each inter-transpicuous, and they  
 whirl  
 Over each other with a thousand motions,  
 Upon a thousand sightless axles spin-  
 ning,  
 And with the force of self-destroying  
 swiftness,  
 Intensely, slowly, solemnly roll on,  
 Kindling with mingled sounds, and  
 many tones,  
 Intelligible words and music wild.  
 With mighty whirl the multitudinous  
 orb  
 Grinds the bright brook into an azure  
 mist  
 Of elemental subtlety, like light ;  
 And the wild odor of the forest flowers,  
 The music of the living grass and air,  
 The emerald light of leaf-entangled  
 beams  
 Round its intense yet self-conflicting  
 speed,  
 Seem kneaded into one ærial mass  
 Which drowns the sense. Within the  
 orb itself,  
 Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,  
 Like to a child o'erwearied with sweet  
 toil,  
 On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,  
 The Spirit of the Earth is laid asleep.  
 And you can see its little lips are moving.  
 Amid the changing light of their own  
 smiles,  
 Like one who talks of what he loves in  
 dream.  
*Ione.* 'T is only mocking the orb's  
 harmony.  
*Panthea.* And from a star upon its  
 forehead, shoot,  
 Like swords of azure fire, or golden  
 spears  
 With tyrant-quelling myrtle overtined,  
 Embleming heaven and earth united  
 now,  
 Vast beams like spokes of some invisible  
 wheel  
 Which whirl as the orb whirls, swifter  
 than thought,  
 Filling the abyss with sun-like lighten-  
 ings,  
 And perpendicular now, and now trans-  
 verse,  
 Pierce the dark soil, and as they pierce  
 and pass,

Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep  
 heart ;  
 Infinite mine of adamant and gold,  
 Valueless stones, and unimagined gems,  
 And caverns on crystalline columns  
 poised  
 With vegetable silver overspread ;  
 Wells of unfathomed fire, and water  
 springs  
 Whence the great sea, even as a child is  
 fed,  
 Whose vapors clothe earth's monarch  
 mountain-tops  
 With kingly ermine snow. The beams  
 flash on  
 And make appear the melancholy ruins  
 Of cancelled cycles ; anchors, beaks of  
 ships ;  
 Planks turned to marble ; quivers, helms,  
 and spears,  
 And gorgon-headed targes, and the  
 wheels  
 Of scythéd chariots and the emblazonry  
 Of trophies, standards, and armorial  
 beasts,  
 Round which death laughed, sepulchred  
 emblems  
 Of dead destruction, ruin within ruin !  
 The wrecks beside of many a city vast,  
 Whose population which the earth grew  
 over  
 Was mortal, but not human ; see, they  
 lie,  
 Their monstrous works, and uncouth  
 skeletons,  
 Their statues, homes and fanes ; pro-  
 digious shapes  
 Huddled in gray annihilation, split,  
 Jammed in the hard, black deep ; and  
 over these,  
 The anatomies of unknown wingéd  
 things,  
 And fishes which were isles of living  
 scale,  
 And serpents, bony chains, twisted  
 around  
 The iron crags, or within heaps of dust  
 To which the tortuous strength of their  
 last pangs  
 Had crushed the iron crags ; and over  
 these  
 The jagged alligator, and the might  
 Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which  
 once  
 Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy  
 shores,  
 And weed-overgrown continents of earth,  
 Increased and multiplied like summer  
 worms

On an abandoned corpse, till the blue  
globe  
Wrapt deluge round it like a cloak, and  
they  
Yelled, gasped, and were abolished ; or  
some God  
Whose throne was in a comet, passed,  
and cried,  
Be not ! And like my words they were  
no more.

*The Earth*

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the  
madness !  
The boundless, overflowing, bursting  
gladness,  
The vaporous exultation not to be con-  
fined !  
Ha ! ha ! the animation of delight  
Which wraps me, like an atmosphere  
of light,  
And bears me as a cloud is borne by its  
own wind.

*The Moon*

Brother mine, calm wanderer,  
Happy globe of land and air,  
Some Spirit is darted like a beam from  
thee,  
Which penetrates my frozen frame,  
And passes with the warmth of flame,  
With love, and odor, and deep melody  
Through me, through me !

*The Earth*

Ha ! ha ! the caverns of my hollow  
mountains,  
My cloven fire-crags, sound-exulting  
fountains  
Laugh with a vast and inextinguishable  
laughter.  
The oceans, and the deserts, and the  
abysses,  
And the deep air's unmeasured  
wildernesses,  
Answer from all their clouds and billows,  
echoing after.

They cry aloud as I do. Sceptred  
curse,  
Who all our green and azure universe  
Threatenedst to muffle round with black  
destruction, sending  
A solid cloud to rain hot thunder-  
stones,  
And splinter and knead down my  
children's bones,  
All I bring forth, to one void mass,  
battering and blending.

Until each crag-like tower, and  
storied column,  
Palace, and obelisk, and temple  
solemn,  
My imperial mountains crowned with  
cloud, and snow, and fire ;  
My sea-like forests. every blade and  
blossom  
Which finds a grave or cradle in my  
bosom.  
Were stamped by thy strong hate into a  
lifeless mire.

How art thou sunk, withdrawn,  
covered, drunk up  
By thirsty nothing, as the brackish  
cup  
Drained by a desert-troop, a little drop  
for all ;  
And from beneath, around, within,  
above,  
Filling thy void annihilation, love  
Burst in like light on caves cloven by  
the thunder-ball.

*The Moon*

The snow upon my lifeless mountains  
Is loosened into living fountains,  
My solid oceans flow, and sing, and  
shine :  
A spirit from my heart bursts forth,  
It clothes with unexpected birth  
My cold bare bosom : Oh ! it must be  
thine  
On mine, on mine !

Gazing on thee I feel, I know  
Green stalks burst forth, and bright  
flowers grow,  
And living shapes upon my bosom  
move :  
Music is in the sea and air,  
Winged clouds soar here and there,  
Dark with the rain new buds are dream-  
ing of :  
'Tis love, all love !

*The Earth*

It interpenetrates my granite mass,  
Through tangled roots and trodden  
clay doth pass,  
Into the utmost leaves and delicatest  
flowers ;  
Upon the winds, among the clouds 'tis  
spread,  
It wakes a life in the forgotten dead,  
They breathe a spirit up from their  
obscurest bowers,

And like a storm bursting its cloudy  
prison  
With thunder, and with whirlwind,  
has arisen  
Out of the lampless caves of unimagined  
being:  
With earthquake shock and swift-  
ness making shiver  
Thought's stagnant chaos, unremoved  
for ever,  
Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-van-  
quished shadows, fleeing,

Leave Man, who was a many-sided  
mirror,  
Which could distort to many a shape  
of error,  
This true fair world of things, a sea re-  
flecting love;  
Which over all his kind as the sun's  
heaven  
Gliding o'er ocean, smooth, serene, and  
even  
Darting from starry depths radiance and  
life, doth move,

Leave Man, even as a leprous child  
is left,  
Who follows a sick beast to some  
warm cleft  
Of rocks, through which the might of  
healing springs is poured;  
Then when it wanders home with  
rosy smile,  
Unconscious, and its mother fears  
awhile  
It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child  
restored—

Man, oh, not men! a chain of linkéd  
thought,  
Of love and might to be divided not,  
Compelling the elements with adaman-  
tine stress; [gaze,  
As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's  
The unquiet republic of the maze  
Of planets, struggling fierce towards  
heaven's free wilderness—

Man, one harmonious soul of many  
a soul,  
Whose nature is its own divine control,  
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to  
the sea; [love;  
Familiar acts are beautiful through  
Labor, and pain, and grief, in life's  
green grove  
Sport like tame beasts, none knew how  
gentle they could be!

His will, with all mean passions, bad  
delights,  
And selfish cares, its trembling  
satellites,  
A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,  
Is as a tempest-wingéd ship, whose  
helm  
Love rules, through waves which  
dare not overwhelm,  
Forcing life's wildest shores to own its  
sovereign sway.

All things confess his strength.  
Through the cold mass  
Of marble and of color his dreams pass;  
Bright threads whence mothers weave  
the robes their children wear;  
Language is a perpetual orphic song,  
Which rules with Dædal harmony a  
throng  
Of thoughts and forms, which else  
senseless and shapeless were.

The lightning is his slave; heaven's  
utmost deep  
Gives up her stars, and like a flock of  
sheep  
They pass before his eye, are numbered,  
and roll on!  
The tempest is his steed, he strides  
the air;  
And the abyss shouts from her depth  
laid bare,  
Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man un-  
veils me; I have none.

#### *The Moon*

The shadow of white death has past  
From my path in heaven at last,  
A clinging shroud of solid frost and sleep;  
And through my newly-woven bowers,  
Wander happy paramours,  
Less mighty, but as mild as those who  
keep  
Thy vales more deep.

#### *The Earth*

As the dissolving warmth of dawn  
may fold  
A half unfrozen dew-globe, green and  
gold,  
And crystalline, till it becomes a wingéd  
mist,  
And wanders up the vault of the blue  
day,  
Outlives the noon, and on the sun's  
last ray  
Hangs o'er the sea, a fleece of fire and  
amethyst,

*The Moon*

Thou art folded, thou art lying  
 In the light which is undying  
 Of thine own joy, and heaven's smile  
 divine ;  
 All suns and constellations shower  
 On thee a light, a life, a power  
 Which doth array thy sphere ; thou  
 pourest thine  
 On mine, on mine !

*The Earth*

I spin beneath my pyramid of night.  
 Which points into the heavens dream-  
 ing delight,  
 Murmuring victorious joy in my en-  
 charmed sleep ;  
 As a youth lulled in love-dreams faint-  
 ly sighing,  
 Under the shadows of his beauty ly-  
 ing,  
 Which round his rest a watch of light  
 and warmth doth keep.

*The Moon*

As in the soft and sweet eclipse,  
 When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,  
 High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes  
 are dull ;  
 So when thy shadow falls on me,  
 Then am I mute and still, by thee  
 Covered ; of thy love, Orb most beautiful,  
 Full, oh, too full !

Thou art speeding round the sun  
 Brightest world of many a one ;  
 Green and azure sphere which shinest  
 With a light which is divinest  
 Among all the lamps of Heaven  
 To whom life and light is given ;  
 I, thy crystal paramour,  
 Borne beside thee by a power  
 Like the polar Paradise,  
 Magnet-like of lovers' eyes ;  
 I, a most enamored maiden  
 Whose weak brain is overladen  
 With the pleasure of her love,  
 Maniac-like around thee move  
 Gazing, an insatiate bride,  
 On thy form from every side  
 Like a Mænad, round the cup  
 Which Agave lifted up  
 In the weird Cadmæan forest.  
 Brother, wheresoe'er thou soarest  
 I must hurry, whirl and follow  
 Through the heavens wide and hollow,  
 Sheltered by the warm embrace  
 Of thy soul from hungry space,

Drinking from thy sense and sight  
 Beauty, majesty, and might,  
 As a lover or chameleon  
 Grows like what it looks upon  
 As a violet's gentle eye  
 Gazes on the azure sky  
 Until its hue grows like what it beholds,  
 As a gray and watery mist  
 Glows like solid amethyst  
 Athwart the western mountain it en-  
 folds,  
 When the sunset sleeps  
 Upon its snow.

*The Earth*

And the weak day weeps  
 That it should be so.  
 Oh, gentle Moon, the voice of thy de-  
 light  
 Falls on me like thy clear and tender  
 light  
 Soothing the seaman, borne the summer  
 night,  
 Through isles for ever calm ;  
 Oh, gentle Moon, thy crystal accents  
 pierce  
 The caverns of my pride's deep universe,  
 Charming the tiger joy, whose tramp-  
 lings fierce  
 Made wounds which need thy balm.  
*Panthea.* I rise as from a bath of  
 sparkling water.  
 A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,  
 Out of the stream of sound.  
*Ione.* Ah me ! sweet sister.  
 The stream of sound has ebbd away  
 from us,  
 And you pretend to rise out of its wave,  
 Because your words fall like the clear,  
 soft dew  
 Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's  
 limbs and hair.  
*Panthea.* Peace ! peace ! A mighty  
 Power, which is as darkness,  
 Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky  
 Is showered like night, and from within  
 the air  
 Bursts, like eclipse which had been  
 gathered up  
 Into the pores of sunlight : the bright  
 visions,  
 Wherein the singing spirits rode and  
 shone,  
 Gleam like pale meteors through a  
 watery night.  
*Ione.* There is a sense of words upon  
 mine ear.  
*Panthea.* An universal sound like  
 words : Oh, list !

*Demogorgon*

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy  
soul,  
Sphere of divinest shapes and har-  
monies,  
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost  
roll  
The love which paves thy path along  
the skies :

*The Earth*

I hear : I am as a drop of dew that  
dies.

*Demogorgon*

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly  
Earth  
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee :  
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the  
swift birth  
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, har-  
mony :

*The Moon*

I hear : I am a leaf shaken by thee !

*Demogorgon*

Ye kings of suns and stars, Demons and  
Gods,  
Ethereal Dominations, who possess  
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes  
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilder-  
ness :

*A Voice from above*

Our great Republic hears, we are  
blest, and bless.

*Demogorgon*

Ye happy dead, whom beams of brightest  
verse  
Are clouds to hide, not colors to  
portray,  
Whether your nature is that universe  
Which once ye saw and suffered—

*A Voice from beneath*

Or as they  
Whom we have left, we change and  
pass away.

*Demogorgon*

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes  
From man's high mind even to the  
central stone  
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-  
fretted domes

To the dull weed some sea-worm  
battens on :

*A confused Voice*

We hear : thy words waken Oblivion.

*Demogorgon*

Spirits, whose homes are flesh : ye beasts  
and birds,  
Ye worms, and fish ; ye living leaves  
and buds ;  
Lightning and wind ; and ye untame-  
able herds.  
Meteors and mists, which throng air's  
solitudes :—

*A Voice*

Thy voice to us is wind among still  
woods.

*Demogorgon*

Man, who wert once a despot and a slave ;  
A dupe and a deceiver ; a decay ;  
A traveller from the cradle to the grave  
Through the dim night of this im-  
mortal day :

*All*

Speak : thy strong words may never  
pass away.

*Demogorgon*

This is the day, which down the void  
abyss  
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for  
Heaven's despotism,  
And Conquest is dragged captive  
through the deep :  
Love, from its awful throne of patient  
power  
In the wise heart, from the last giddy  
hour  
Of dead endurance, from the slippery,  
steep,  
And narrow verge of crag-like agony,  
springs  
And folds over the world its healing  
wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and En-  
durance,  
These are the seals of that most firm  
assurance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's  
strength :  
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,  
Mother of many acts and hours, should  
free

The serpent that would clasp her with  
his length;  
These are the spells by which to reas-  
sume  
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks in-  
finite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or  
night;

To defy Power, which seems omni-  
potent;  
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope  
creates  
From its own wreck the thing it con-  
templates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor re-  
pent;

This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and  
free;

This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and  
Victory.<sup>1</sup> *Sept. 1818-1819. 1820.*

<sup>1</sup> The prominent feature of Shelley's theory of the destiny of the human species was that evil is not inherent in the system of the creation, but an accident that might be expelled. This also forms a portion of Christianity: God made earth and man perfect, till he, by his fall,

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

Shelley believed that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none. It is not my part in these Notes to notice the arguments that have been urged against this opinion, but to mention the fact that he entertained it, and was indeed attached to it with fervent enthusiasm. That man could be so perfectionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system. And the subject he loved best to dwell on was the image of One warring with the Evil Principle, oppressed not only by it, but by all—even the good, who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity; a victim full of fortitude and hope and the spirit of triumph, emanating from a reliance in the ultimate omnipotence of Good. Such he had depicted in his last poem, when he made Laon the enemy and the victim of tyrants. He now took a more idealised image of the same subject. He followed certain classical authorities in figuring Saturn as the good principle, Jupiter the usurping evil one, and Prometheus as the regenerator, who, unable to bring mankind back to primitive innocence, used knowledge as a weapon to defeat evil, by leading mankind, beyond the state wherein they are senseless through ignorance, to that in which they are virtuous through wisdom. Jupiter punished the temerity of the Titan by chaining him to a rock of Caucasus, and causing a vulture to devour his still-renewed heart. There was a prophecy aloft in heaven portending the fall of Jove, the secret of averting which was known only to Prometheus; and the god offered freedom from torture on condition of its being communicated to him. According to the

## THE SENSITIVE PLANT

### PART FIRST

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew.  
And the young winds fed it with silver  
dew,  
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the  
light,  
And closed them beneath the kisses of  
night.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,

mythological story, this referred to the offspring of Thetis, who was destined to be greater than his father. Prometheus at last bought pardon for his crime of enriching mankind with his gifts, by revealing the prophecy. Hercules killed the vulture, and set him free; and Thetis was married to Peleus, the father of Achilles.

Shelley adapted the catastrophe of this story to his peculiar views. The son greater than his father, born of the nuptials of Jupiter and Thetis, was to dethrone Evil, and bring back a happier reign than that of Saturn. Prometheus defies the power of his enemy, and endures centuries of torture; till the hour arrives when Jove, blind to the real event, but darkly guessing that some great good to himself will flow, espouses Thetis. At the moment, the Primal Power of the world drives him from his usurped throne, and Strength, in the person of Hercules, liberates Humanity, typified in Prometheus, from the tortures generated by evil done or suffered. Asia, one of the Oceanides, is the wife of Prometheus—she was, according to other mythological interpretations, the same as Venus and Nature. When the benefactor of mankind is liberated, Nature resumes the beauty of her prime, and is united to her husband, the emblem of the human race, in perfect and happy union. In the fourth Act, the Poet gives further scope to his imagination, and idealizes the forms of creation—such as we know them, instead of such as they appeared to the Greeks. Maternal Earth, the mighty parent, is superseded by the Spirit of the Earth, the guide of our planet through the realms of sky; while his fair and weaker companion and attendant, the Spirit of the Moon, receives bliss from the annihilation of Evil in the superior sphere.

Shelley develops more particularly in the lyrics of this drama his abstruse and imaginative theories with regard to the creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague. It was his design to write prose metaphysical essays on the nature of Man, which would have served to explain much of what is obscure in his poetry; a few scattered fragments of observations and remarks alone remain. He considered these philosophical views of Mind and Nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry.

More popular poets clothe the ideal with familiar and sensible imagery. Shelley loved to idealize the real—to gift the mechanism of the material universe with a soul and a voice, and to bestow such also on the most delicate and abstract emotions and thoughts of the mind. Sophocles was his great master in this species of imagery.—(From Mrs. Shelley's note.)

Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere ;  
And each flower and herb on Earth's  
dark breast  
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with  
bliss  
In the garden, the field, or the wilder-  
ness,  
Like a doe in the noontide with love's  
sweet want,  
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop and then the violet,  
Arose from the ground with warm rain  
wet,  
And their breath was mixed with fresh  
odor, sent  
From the turf, like the voice and the  
instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the  
tulip tall,  
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,  
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's  
recess,  
Till they die of their own dear loveliness ;

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,  
Whom youth makes so fair and passion  
so pale,  
That the light of its tremulous bells is  
seen  
Through their pavilions of tender green ;

And the hyacinth purple, and white,  
and blue,  
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal  
anew  
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,  
It was felt like an odor within the  
sense ;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath  
address,  
Which unveiled the depth of her glow-  
ing breast,  
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air  
The soul of her beauty and love lay  
bare :

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,  
As a Maenad, its moonlight-colored cup,  
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,  
Gazed through clear dew on the tender  
sky ;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet  
tuberose,

The sweetest flower for scent that blows ;  
And all rare blossoms from every clime  
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant  
bosom  
Was pranked under boughs of embower-  
ing blossom,  
With golden and green light, slanting  
through  
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,  
And starry river-buds glimmered by,  
And around them the soft stream did  
glide and dance  
With a motion of sweet sound and  
radiance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of  
moss,  
Which led through the garden, along  
and across,  
Some open at once to the sun and the  
breeze,  
Some lost among bowers of blossoming  
trees,

Were all paved with daisies and delicate  
bells  
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,  
And flowrets which drooping as day  
drooped too  
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and  
blue,  
To roof the glow-worm from the evening  
dew.

And from this undefiled Paradise  
The flowers (as an infant's awakening  
eyes  
Smile on its mother, whose singing  
sweet  
Can first lull, and at last must awaken  
it),

When Heaven's blithe winds had un-  
folded them,  
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem.  
Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one  
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun ;

For each one was interpenetrated  
With the light and the odor its neigh-  
bor shed,  
Like young lovers whom youth and love  
make dear  
Wrapped and filled by their mutual  
atmosphere.



But the Sensitive Plant which could  
give small fruit  
Of the love which it felt from the leaf  
to the root,  
Received more than all, it loved more  
than ever,  
Where none wanted but it, could belong  
to the giver,

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright  
flower :  
Radiance and odor are not its dower ;  
It loves, even like Love, its deep heart  
is full,  
It desires what it has not, the beautiful !

The light winds which from unsustain-  
ing wings,  
Shed the music of many murmurings ;  
The beams which dart from many a  
star  
Of the flowers whose hues they bear  
afar ;

The plumed insects swift and free,  
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,  
Laden with light and odor, which pass  
Over the gleam of the living grass ;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie  
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides  
high,  
Then wander like spirits among the  
spheres,  
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it  
bears ;

The quivering vapors of dim noontide,  
Which like a sea o'er the warm earth  
glide,  
In which every sound, and odor, and  
beam,  
Move, as reeds in a single stream ;

Each and all like ministering angels  
were  
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to  
bear.  
Whilst the lagging hours of the day  
went by  
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from  
heaven above,  
And the Earth was all rest, and the air  
was all love,  
And delight, tho' less bright, was far  
more deep,  
And the day's veil fell from the world  
of sleep,

And the beasts, and the birds, and the  
insects were drowned  
In an ocean of dreams without a sound ;  
Whose waves never mark, tho' they  
ever impress  
The light sand which paves it, conscious-  
ness ;

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale  
Ever sang more sweet as the day might  
fail,  
And snatches of its Elysian chant  
Were mixed with the dreams of the  
Sensitive Plant.)

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest  
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest ;  
A sweet child weary of its delight,  
The feeblest and yet the favorite,  
Cradled within the embrace of night.

#### PART SECOND

There was a Power in this sweet place,  
An Eve in this Eden ; a ruling grace  
Which to the flowers did they waken or  
dream,  
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,  
Whose form was upborne by a lovely  
mind  
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien  
and motion  
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the  
ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even :  
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,  
Like the lamps of the air when night  
walks forth,  
Laughed round her footsteps up from  
the Earth !

She had no companion of mortal race.  
But her tremulous breath and her flush-  
ing face  
Told, whilst the morn kissed the sleep  
from her eyes  
That her dreams were less slumber than  
Paradise :

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet  
sake  
Had deserted heaven while the stars  
were awake.  
As if yet around her he lingering were,  
Tho' the veil of daylight concealed him  
from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it  
pressed ;  
You might hear by the heaving of her  
breast,  
That the coming and going of the wind  
Brought pleasure there and left passion  
behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,  
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod  
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy  
sweep,  
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green  
deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden  
sweet  
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet ;  
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came  
From her glowing fingers thro' all their  
frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the  
stream  
On those that were faint with the sunny  
beam ;  
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers  
She emptied the rain of the thunder  
showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender  
hands,  
And sustained them with rods and osier  
bands ;  
If the flowers had been her own infants  
she  
Could never have nursed them more  
tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing  
worms,  
And things of obscene and unlovely  
forms,  
She bore in a basket of Indian woof,  
Into the rough woods far aloof,

In a basket, of grasses and wild-flowers  
full,  
The freshest her gentle hands could pull  
For the poor banished insects, whose  
intent,  
Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris  
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft  
moths that kiss  
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm  
not, did she  
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,  
Where butterflies dream of the life to  
come,  
She left clinging round the smooth and  
dark  
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

This fairest creature from earliest spring  
Thus moved through the garden minis-  
tering  
All the sweet season of summer tide,  
And ere the first leaf looked brown—she  
died !

## PART THIRD

Three days the flowers of the garden fair,  
Like stars when the moon is awakened,  
were,  
Or the waves of Baïæ, ere luminous  
She floats up through the smoke of  
Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive Plant  
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,  
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and  
slow,  
And the sobs of the mourners deep and  
low ;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,  
And the silent motions of passing death,  
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and  
dank,  
Sent through the pores of the coffin  
plank ;

The dark grass, and the flowers among  
the grass,  
Were bright with tears as the crowd did  
pass ;  
From their sighs the wind caught a  
mournful tone,  
And sate in the pines, and gave groan  
for groan.

The garden once fair, became cold and  
foul,  
Like the corpse of her who had been its  
soul,  
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,  
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap  
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,  
And frost in the mist of the morning  
rode,  
Though the noonday sun looked clear  
and bright,  
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

The rose leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,  
Paved the turf and the moss below.  
The lilies were drooping, and white, and wan.  
Like the head and the skin of a dying man.

And Indian plants, of scent and hue  
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,  
Leaf by leaf, day after day,  
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and gray,  
and red,  
And white with the whiteness of what is dead,  
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind past;  
Their whistling noise made the birds aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the winged seeds,  
Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,  
Till they clung round many a sweet flower's stem,  
Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet  
Fell from the stalks on which they were set;

And the eddies drove them here and there,  
As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the broken stalks,  
Were bent and tangled across the walks;  
And the leafless network of parasite bowers

Massed into ruin; and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the snow,

All loathliest weeds began to grow,  
Whose coarse leaves were splashed with many a speck.

Like the water-snake's belly and the toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,

And the dock, and henbane, and hemlock dank.

Stretched out its long and hollow shank,  
And stifled the air till the dead wind stank.

And plants, at whose names the verse feels loath,

Filled the place with a monstrous under growth,  
Prickly, and pulposus, and blistering, and blue,  
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics, and fungi, with mildew and mould  
Started like mist from the wet ground cold;

Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead  
With a spirit of growth had been animated!

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,  
Made the running rivulet thick and dumb

And at its outlet flags huge as stakes  
Dammed it up with roots knotted like water snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was still,

The vapors arose which have strength to kill:

At morn they were seen, at noon they were felt,

At night they were darkness no star could melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to spray

Crept and flitted in broad noonday  
Unseen; every branch on which they alit

By a venomous blight was burned and bit.

The Sensitive Plant like one forbid  
Wept, and the tears within each lid  
Of its folded leaves which together grew  
Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches soon

By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;

The sap shrank to the root through every pore

As blood to a heart that will beat no more.

For Winter came: the wind was his whip:

One choppy finger was on his lip:

He had torn the cataracts from the hills

And they clanked at his girdle like manacles;

His breath was a chain which without  
a sound  
The earth, and the air, and the water  
bound ;  
He came, fiercely driven, in his chariot-  
throne  
By the tenfold blasts of the arctic zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of  
living death  
Fled from the frost to the earth beneath.  
Their decay and sudden flight from frost  
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost !

And under the roots of the Sensitive  
Plant  
The moles and the dormice died for  
want :  
The birds dropped stiff from the frozen  
air  
And were caught in the branches naked  
and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain  
And its dull drops froze on the boughs  
again,  
Then there steamed up a freezing dew  
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain  
grew ;

And a northern whirlwind, wandering  
about  
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child  
out,  
Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy  
and stiff,  
And snapped them off with his rigid  
griff.

When winter had gone and spring came  
back  
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck ;  
But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and  
docks, and darnels,  
Rose like the dead from their ruined  
charnels.

## CONCLUSION

Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that  
Which within its boughs like a spirit  
sat  
Ere its outward form had known decay,  
Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that lady's gentle mind,  
No longer with the form combined  
Which scattered love, as stars do light,  
Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess ; but in this life  
Of error, ignorance, and strife,  
Where nothing is, but all things seem,  
And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet  
Pleasant if one considers it,  
To own that death itself must be,  
Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,  
And all sweet shapes and odors there,  
In truth have never passed away :  
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed ; not they.  
1820. 1820.

## THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting  
flowers,  
From the seas and the streams ;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when  
laid  
In their noonday dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews  
that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's  
breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
And their great pines groan aghast ;  
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,  
While I sleep in the arms of the  
blast.  
Sublime on the towers of my skiey  
bowers,  
Lightning my pilot sits,  
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
It struggles and howls at fits ;  
Over earth and ocean, with gentle  
motion,  
This pilot is guiding me,  
Lured by the love of the genii that move  
In the depths of the purple sea ;  
Over the rills, and the crags, and the  
hills,  
Over the lakes and the plains,  
Wherever he dream, under mountain or  
stream,  
The Spirit he loves remains ;  
And I all the while bask in heaven's  
blue smile,  
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor  
eyes,

And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
When the morning star shines dead,  
As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
Which an earthquake rocks and  
swings,

An eagle alit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings.  
And when sunset may breathe, from the  
lit sea beneath.

Its ardors of rest and of love,  
And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
From the depth of heaven above,  
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy  
nest,  
As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden.  
Whom mortals call the moon,  
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like  
floor,

By the midnight breezes strewn ;  
And wherever the beat of her unseen  
feet,

Which only the angels hear,  
May have broken the woof of my tent's  
thin roof,

The stars peep behind her and peer ;  
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
Like a swarm of golden bees,  
When I widen the rent in my wind-built  
tent,

Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,  
Like strips of the sky fallen through me  
on high,  
Are each paved with the moon and  
these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning  
zone,

And the moon's with a girdle of  
pearl :

The volcanoes are dim, and the stars  
reel and swim,

When the whirlwinds my banner  
unfurl.

From cape to cape, with a bridge-like  
shape,

Over a torrent sea,  
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,

The mountains its columns be.  
The triumphal arch through which I  
march

With hurricane, fire, and snow,  
When the powers of the air are chained  
to my chair,

Is the million-colored bow ;

The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,  
While the moist earth was laughing  
below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,  
And the nursling of the sky ;

I pass through the pores of the ocean  
and shores ;

I change, but I cannot die.

For after the rain when with never a  
stain,

The pavilion of heaven is bare,  
And the winds and sunbeams with their  
convex gleams,

Build up the blue dome of air,  
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,  
And out of the caverns of rain.

Like a child from the womb, like a  
ghost from the tomb,

I arise and unbuild it again.

1820. 1820.

#### TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit !

Bird thou never wert.

That from heaven, or near it,

Pourest thy full heart

In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher

From the earth thou springest

Like a cloud of fire ;

The blue deep thou wingest,

And singing still dost soar, and soaring  
ever singest.

In the golden lightning

Of the sunken sun,

O'er which clouds are brightning,

Thou dost float and run ;

Like an unbodied joy whose race is just  
begun.

The pale purple even

Melts around thy flight ;

Like a star of heaven,

In the broad daylight

Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy  
shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows

Of that silver sphere,

Whose intense lamp narrows

In the white dawn clear,

Until we hardly see, we feel that it is  
there.

All the earth and air

With thy voice is loud,

As, when night is bare,  
From one lonely cloud  
The moon rains out her beams, and  
heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not ;  
What is most like thee ?  
From rainbow clouds there flow not  
Drops so bright to see,  
As from thy presence showers a rain of  
melody.

Like a poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing hymns unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it  
heeded not :

Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace-tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love, which over-  
flows her bower :

Like a glow-worm golden  
In a dell of dew,  
Scattering unbeholden  
Its ærial hue  
Among the flowers and grass, which  
screen it from the view :

Like a rose embowered  
In its own green leaves,  
By warm winds deflowered,  
Till the scent it gives  
Makes faint with too much sweet these  
heavy-winged thieves :

Sound of vernal showers  
On the twinkling grass,  
Rain-awakened flowers,  
All that ever was  
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music  
doth surpass :

Teach us, sprite or bird,  
What sweet thoughts are thine:  
I have never heard  
Praise of love or wine  
That panted forth a flood of rapture so  
divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
Or triumphal chant,  
Matched with thine would be all  
But an empty vaunt,  
A thing wherein we feel there is some  
hidden want.

What objects are the fountains  
Of thy happy strain ?  
What fields, or waves, or mountains ?  
What shapes of sky or plain ?  
What love of thine own kind ? what ig-  
norance of pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance  
Languor cannot be :  
Shadow of annoyance  
Never came near thee :  
Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad  
satiety.

Waking or asleep,  
Thou of death must deem  
Things more true and deep  
Than we mortals dream,  
Or how could thy notes flow in such a  
crystal stream ?

We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not :  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught ;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of  
saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn  
Hate, and pride, and fear ;  
If we were things born  
Not to shed a tear,  
I know not how thy joy we ever should  
come near.

Better than all measures  
Of delightful sound,  
Better than all treasures  
That in books are found,  
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of  
the ground !

Teach me half the gladness  
That thy brain must know,  
Such harmonious madness  
From my lips would flow,  
The world should listen then, as I am  
listening now. 1820. 1820.

#### TO—

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
Thou needest not fear mine ;  
My spirit is too deeply laden  
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,  
Thou needest not fear mine ;  
Innocent is the heart's devotion  
With which I worship thine.

1820. 1824.

## ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA arose  
 From her couch of snows  
 In the Acroceraunian mountains,—  
 From cloud and from crag,  
 With many a jag,  
 Shepherding her bright fountains.  
 She leapt down the rocks,  
 With her rainbow locks  
 Streaming among the streams;—  
 Her steps paved with green  
 The downward ravine  
 Which slopes to the western gleams :  
 And gliding and springing  
 She went, ever singing,  
 In murmurs as soft as sleep ;  
 The Earth seemed to love her,  
 And Heaven smiled above her,  
 As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,  
 On his glacier cold,  
 With his trident the mountains strook  
 And opened a chasm  
 In the rocks :—with the spasm  
 All Erymanthus shook.  
 And the black south wind  
 It concealed behind  
 The urns of the silent snow,  
 And earthquake and thunder  
 Did rend in sunder  
 The bars of the springs below.  
 The beard and the hair  
 Of the River-god were  
 Seen through the torrent's sweep,  
 As he followed the light  
 Of the fleet nymph's flight  
 To the brink of the Dorian deep.

“ Oh, save me ! Oh, guide me !  
 And bid the deep hide me,  
 For he grasps me now by the hair ! ”  
 The loud Ocean heard,  
 To its blue depth stirred,  
 And divided at her prayer ;  
 And under the water  
 The Earth's white daughter  
 Fled like a sunny beam ;  
 Behind her descended  
 Her billows, unblended  
 With the brackish Dorian stream :—  
 Like a gloomy stain  
 On the emerald main  
 Alpheus rushed behind,—  
 As an eagle pursuing  
 A dove to its ruin  
 Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers  
 Where the Ocean Powers  
 Sit on their pearly thrones,  
 Through the coral woods  
 Of the weltering floods,  
 Over heaps of unvalued stones ;  
 Through the dim beams  
 Which amid the streams  
 Weave a network of colored light ;  
 And under the caves,  
 Where the shadowy waves  
 Are as green as the forest's night :—  
 Outspeeding the shark,  
 And the sword-fish dark,  
 Under the ocean foam,  
 And up through the rifts  
 Of the mountain cliffs  
 They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains  
 In Enna's mountains,  
 Down one vale where the morning basks,  
 Like friends once parted  
 Grown single-hearted,  
 They ply their watery tasks.  
 At sunrise they leap  
 From their cradles steep  
 In the cave of the shelving hill ;  
 At noontide they flow  
 Through the woods below  
 And the meadows of Asphodel ;  
 And at night they sleep  
 In the rocking deep  
 Beneath the Ortygian shore ;  
 Like spirits that lie  
 In the azure sky  
 When they love but live no more.

1820. 1824.

## HYMN OF PAN

FROM the forests and highlands  
 We come, we come ;  
 From the river-girt islands,  
 Where loud waves are dumb  
 Listening to my sweet pipings.  
 The wind in the reeds and the rushes,  
 The bees on the bells of thyme,  
 The birds on the myrtle bushes,  
 The cicale above in the lime,  
 And the lizards below in the grass,  
 Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,  
 Listening to my sweet pipings.  
 Liquid Peneus was flowing,  
 And all dark Tempe lay  
 In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing  
 The light of the dying day,  
 Speeded by my sweet pipings.

The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,  
 And the Nymphs of the woods and  
     waves,  
 To the edge of the moist river-lawns,  
 And the brink of the dewy caves,  
 And all that did then attend and follow  
 Were silent with love, as you now,  
     Apollo,  
 With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,  
     I sang of the dædal Earth,  
 And of Heaven—and the giant wars,  
     And Love, and Death, and Birth,—  
     And then I changed my pip-  
     ings,—  
 Singing how down the vale of Menalus  
 I pursued a maiden and clasp'd a reed :  
 Gods and men, we are all deluded thus !  
 It breaks in our bosom and then we  
     bleed :  
 All wept, as I think both ye now would,  
 If envy or age had not frozen your blood,  
 At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.  
                     1820. 1824.

#### THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the  
     way,  
 Bare winter suddenly was changed to  
     spring.  
 And gentle odors led my steps astray,  
 Mixed with a sound of waters mur-  
     muring  
 Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay  
 Under a copse, and hardly dared to  
     fling  
 Its green arms round the bosom of the  
     stream,  
 But kissed it and then fled, as thou  
     mightest in dream.  
 There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,  
 Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the  
     earth,  
 The constellated flower that never sets :  
 Faint ox lips ; tender bluebells, at  
     whose birth  
 The sod scarce heaved ; and that tall  
     flower that wets—  
     Like a child, half in tenderness and  
     mirth—  
 Its mother's face with heaven's collected  
     tears,  
 When the low wind, its playmate's voice,  
     it hears.  
 And in the warm hedge grew lush  
     eglantine,

Green cowbind and the moonlight-  
     colored May,  
 And cherry-blossoms, and white cups,  
     whose wine  
     Was the bright dew, yet drained not  
     by the day ;  
 And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,  
     With its dark buds and leaves, wan-  
     dering astray ;  
 And flowers azure, black, and streaked  
     with gold.  
 Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge,  
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple  
     prankt with white,  
 And starry river buds among the sedge,  
 And floating water-lilies, broad and  
     bright,  
 Which lit the oak that overhung the  
     hedge  
     With moonlight beams of their own  
     watery light ;  
 And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep  
     green  
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober  
     sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers  
 I made a nosegay, bound in such a  
     way  
 That the same hues, which in their  
     natural bowers  
 Were mingled or opposed, the like  
     array  
 Kept these imprisoned children of the  
     Hours  
     Within my hand,—and then, elate  
     and gay.  
 I hastened to the spot whence I had  
     come,  
 That I might there present it!—oh! to  
     whom?                      1820. 1822.

#### SONG

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,  
 Spirit of Delight !  
 Wherefore hast thou left me now  
 Many a day and night ?  
 Many a weary night and day  
 'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me  
 Win thee back again ?  
 With the joyous and the free  
 Thou wilt scoff at pain.  
 Spirit false ! thou hast forgot  
 All but those who need thee not.



As a lizard with the shade  
Of a trembling leaf,  
Thou with sorrow art dismayed ;  
Even the sighs of grief  
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,  
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty  
To a merry measure,  
Thou wilt never come for pity,  
Thou wilt come for pleasure,  
Pity then will cut away  
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,  
Spirit of Delight !  
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,  
And the starry night ;  
Autumn evening, and the morn  
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms  
Of the radiant frost ;  
I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
Every thing almost  
Which is Nature's, and may be  
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,  
And such society  
As is quiet, wise, and good ;  
Between thee and me  
What difference ? but thou dost possess  
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,  
And like light can flee,  
But above all other things,  
Spirit, I love thee—  
Thou art love and life ! Oh come,  
Make once more my heart thy home.  
1820.<sup>1</sup> 1824.

#### TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness  
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the  
earth,  
Wandering companionless  
Among the stars that have a different  
birth,—  
And ever changing, like a joyless eye  
That finds no object worth its constancy?  
1820. 1824.

<sup>1</sup> Though included by Mrs. Shelley, and by later editors, among the poems of 1821, there is a copy of this poem in the Harvard College Manuscripts, dated in Shelley's handwriting, "Pisa, May, 1820." See note in Edward Dowden's Edition of Shelley.

#### THE WORLD'S WANDERERS

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light  
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,  
In what cavern of the night  
Will thy pinions close now ?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and gray  
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,  
In what depth of night or day  
Seekest thou repose now ?

Weary wind, who wanderest  
Like the world's rejected guest,  
Hast thou still some secret nest  
On the tree or billow ?

1820. 1824.

#### TIME LONG PAST

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead  
Is Time long past.  
A tone which is now forever fled,  
A hope which is now forever past,  
A love so sweet it could not last,  
Was Time long past.

There were sweet dreams in the night  
Of Time long past :  
And, was it sadness or delight,  
Each day a shadow onward cast  
Which made us wish it yet might last—  
That Time long past.

There is regret, almost remorse,  
For Time long past.  
'Tis like a child's beloved corpse  
A father watches, till at last  
Beauty is like remembrance, cast  
From Time long past.  
1820. 1870.

#### EPIPSYCHIDION

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE NOBLE AND  
UNFORTUNATE LADY, EMILIA V———,  
NOW IMPRISONED IN THE CONVENT  
OF ———

L'anima amante si slancia fuori del creato, e  
si crea nel infinito un Mondo tutto per essa,  
diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso baratro.  
HER OWN WORDS.

SWEET Spirit ! Sister of that orphan  
one,  
Whose empire is the name thou weepest  
on,  
In my heart's temple I suspend to thee  
These votive wreaths of withered  
memory.

Poor captive bird! who, from thy  
 narrow cage,  
 Pourest such music, that it might as-  
 suage  
 The rugged hearts of those who prisoned  
 thee,  
 Were they not deaf to all sweet melody ;  
 This song shall be thy rose : its petals  
 pale  
 Are dead, indeed, my adored Nightin-  
 gale!  
 But soft and fragrant is the faded  
 blossom,  
 And it has no thorn left to wound thy  
 bosom.

High, spirit-winged Heart! who dost  
 for ever  
 Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain en-  
 deavor,  
 Till those bright plumes of thought, in  
 which arrayed  
 It over-soared this low and worldly  
 shade,  
 Lie shattered ; and thy panting, wounded  
 breast  
 Stains with dear blood its unmaternal  
 nest!  
 I weep vain tears : blood would less  
 bitter be,  
 Yet poured forth gladlier, could it profit  
 thee.

Seraph of Heaven! too gentle to be  
 human,  
 Veiling beneath that radiant form of  
 Woman  
 All that is insupportable in thee  
 Of light, and love, and immortality !  
 Sweet Benediction in the eternal Curse !  
 Veiled Glory of this lampless Universe !  
 Thou Moon beyond the clouds! Thou  
 living Form  
 Among the Dead! Thou Star above the  
 Storm!  
 Thou Wonder, and thou Beauty, and  
 thou Terror!  
 Thou Harmony of Nature's art! Thou  
 Mirror  
 In whom, as in the splendor of the Sun,  
 All shapes look glorious which thou  
 gazest on!  
 Ay, even the dim words which obscure  
 thee now  
 Flash, lightning-like, with unaccus-  
 tomed glow ;  
 I pray thee that thou blot from this sad  
 song  
 All of its much mortality and wrong,

With those clear drops, which start like  
 sacred dew  
 From the twin lights thy sweet soul /  
 darkens through,  
 Weeping, till sorrow becomes ecstasy :  
 Then smile on it, so that it may not die.

I never thought before my death to  
 see  
 Youth's vision thus made perfect.  
 Emily,  
 I love thee ; though the world by no  
 thin name  
 Will hide that love, from its unvalued  
 shame.  
 Would we two had been twins of the same  
 mother !  
 Or, that the name my heart lent to  
 another  
 Could be a sister's bond for her and  
 thee,  
 Blending two beams of one eternity !  
 Yet were one lawful and the other true,  
 These names, though dear, could paint  
 not, as is due,  
 How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah me !  
 I am not thine : I am a part of thee.

Sweet Lamp! my moth-like Muse has  
 burnt its wings ;  
 Or, like a dying swan who soars and  
 sings,  
 Young Love should teach Time, in his  
 own gray style,  
 All that thou art. Art thou not void of  
 guile,  
 A lovely soul formed to be blest and  
 bless?  
 A well of sealed and secret happiness,  
 Whose waters like blithe light and  
 music are,  
 Vanquishing dissonance and gloom? A  
 Star  
 Which moves not in the moving  
 Heavens, alone?  
 A smile amid dark frowns? a gentle  
 tone  
 Amid rude voices? a beloved light?  
 A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight?  
 A Lute which those whom Love has  
 taught to play  
 Make music on, to soothe the roughest  
 day  
 And lull fond grief asleep? a buried  
 treasure?  
 A cradle of young thoughts of wingless  
 pleasure ;  
 A violet-shrouded grave of Woe?—I  
 measure

The world of fancies, seeking one like thee,  
And find—alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's rough way,  
And lured me towards sweet Death; as Night by Day,  
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,  
Led into light, life, peace. An antelope,  
In the suspended impulse of its lightness,  
Were less ethereally light: the brightness  
Of her divinest presence trembles through  
Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of dew  
Embodied in the windless Heaven of June  
Amid the splendor-winged stars, the Moon  
Burns, inextinguishably beautiful:  
And from her lips, as from a hyacinth full  
Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,  
Killing the sense with passion; sweet as stops  
Of planetary music heard in trance.  
In her mild lights the starry spirits dance,  
The sunbeams of those wells which ever leap  
Under the lightnings of the soul—too deep  
For the brief fathom-line of thought or sense.  
The glory of her being, issuing thence,  
Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a warm shade  
Of unentangled intermixture, made  
By Love, of light and motion: one intense  
Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,  
Whose flowing outlines mingle in their flowing  
Around her cheeks and utmost fingers glowing  
With the uninterrupted blood, which there  
Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air  
The crimson pulse of living morning quiver),  
Continuously prolonged, and ending never,  
Till they are lost, and in that Beauty furl  
Which penetrates and clasps and fills the world;

Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.  
Warm fragrance seems to fall from her light dress  
And her loose hair; and where some heavy tress  
The air of her own speed has disentwined,  
The sweetness seems to satiate the faint wind;  
And in the soul a wild odor is felt,  
Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that melt  
Into the bosom of a frozen bud.—  
See where she stands! a mortal shape indued  
With love and life and light and deity.  
And motion which may change but cannot die;  
An image of some bright Eternity;  
A shadow of some golden dream; a Splendor  
Leaving the third sphere pilotless; a tender  
Reflection of the eternal Moon of Love  
Under whose motions life's dull billows move;  
A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and Morning;  
A Vision like incarnate April, warning,  
With smiles and tears, Frost the Anatomy  
Into his summer grave.

Ah, woe is me!  
What have I dared? where am I lifted?  
how  
Shall I descend, and perish not? I know  
That Love makes all things equal: I have heard  
By mine own heart this joyous truth averred:  
The spirit of the worm beneath the sod  
In love and worship, blends itself with God.

Spouse! Sister! Angel! Pilot of the Fate  
Whose course has been so starless! Oh, too late  
Belovéd! Oh, too soon adored, by me!  
For in the fields of immortality  
My spirit should at first have worshipped thine,  
A divine presence in a place divine;  
Or should have moved beside it on this earth,  
A shadow of that substance, from its birth;  
But not as now:—I love thee; yes, I feel  
That on the fountain of my heart a seal

Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright  
For thee, since in those *tears* thou hast  
delight.

We—are we not formed, as notes of  
music are,

For one another, though dissimilar :

Such difference without discord, as can  
make

Those sweetest sounds, in which all  
spirits shake

As trembling leaves in a continuous air?

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids  
me dare

Beacon the rocks on which high hearts  
are wrecked.

I never was attached to that great sect,  
Whose doctrine is, that each one should  
select

Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,  
And all the rest, though fair and wise,  
commend

To cold oblivion, though it is in the  
code

Of modern morals, and the beaten road  
Which those poor slaves with weary  
footsteps tread,

Who travel to their home among the  
dead

By the broad highway of the world, and  
so

With one chained friend, perhaps a  
jealous foe,

The dreariest and the longest journey go.

True Love in this differs from gold  
and clay

That to divide is not to take away.

Love is like understanding, that grows  
bright,

Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy  
light,

Imagination! which from earth and sky,  
And from the depths of human phan-  
tasy,

As from a thousand prisms and mirrors,  
fills

The Universe with glorious beams, and  
kills

Error, the worm, with many a sun-like  
arrow

Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow  
The heart that loves, the brain that  
contemplates,

The life that wears, the spirit that  
creates

One object, and one form, and builds  
thereby

A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in  
this :

Evil from good ; misery from happiness ;  
The baser from the nobler ; the impure  
And frail, from what is clear and must  
endure.

If you divide suffering and dross, you  
may

Diminish till it is consumed away ;  
If you divide pleasure and love and  
thought,

Each part exceeds the whole ; and we  
know not

How much, while any yet remains un-  
shared,

Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow  
spared :

This truth is that deep well, whence  
sages draw

The unenvied light of hope ; the eternal  
law

By which those live, to whom this world  
of life

Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife  
Tills for the promise of a later birth

The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit  
oft

Met on its visioned wanderings, far  
aloft,

In the clear golden prime of my youth's  
dawn,

Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,  
Amid the enchanted mountains, and the  
caves

Of divine sleep, and on the air-like  
waves

Of wonder-level dream, whose tremu-  
lous floor

Paved her light steps ;—on an imagined  
shore,

Under the gray beak of some promon-  
tory

She met me, robed in such exceeding  
glory,

That I beheld her not. In solitudes  
Her voice came to me through the  
whispering woods,

And from the fountains, and the odors  
deep

Of flowers, which, like lips murmuring  
in their sleep

Of the sweet kisses which had lulled  
them there,

Breathed but of *her* to the enamored air ;  
And from the breezes whether low or  
loud,

And from the rain of every passing cloud,

And from the singing of the summer  
birds,  
And from all sounds, all silence. In  
the words  
Of antique verse and high romance,—in  
form,  
Sound, color—in whatever checks that  
Storm  
Which with the shattered present chokes  
the past ;  
And in that best philosophy, whose taste  
Makes this cold common hell, our life, a  
doom  
As glorious as a fiery martyrdom ;  
Her Spirit was the harmony of truth.—

Then, from the caverns of my dreamy  
youth  
I sprang, as one sandalled with plumes  
of fire,  
And towards the loadstar of my one  
desire,  
I fitted, like a dizzy moth, whose flight  
Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light, —  
When it would seek in Hesper's setting  
sphere  
A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,  
As if it were a lamp of earthly flame.—  
But She, whom prayers or tears then  
could not tame,  
Passed, like a God throned on a wingéd  
planet,  
Whose burning plumes to tenfold swift-  
ness fan it,  
Into the dreary cone of our life's shade ;  
And as a man with mighty loss dismayed,  
I would have followed, though the  
grave between  
Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are  
unseen :  
When a voice said :—" O Thou of hearts  
the weakest,  
The phantom is beside thee whom thou  
seekest."  
Then I—" Where?" the world's echo  
answered " where !"  
And in that silence, and in my despair,  
I questioned every tongueless wind that  
flew  
Over my tower of mourning, if it knew  
Whither 'twas fled, this soul out of my  
soul ;  
And murmured names and spells which  
have control  
Over the sightless tyrants of our fate ;  
But neither prayer nor verse could dis-  
sipate  
The night which closed on her ; nor  
uncreate

That world within this Chaos, mine and  
me,  
Of which she was the veiled Divinity,  
The world I say of thoughts that wor-  
shipped her :  
And therefore I went forth, with hope  
and fear  
And every gentle passion sick to death,  
Feeding my course with expectation's  
breath,  
Into the wintry forest of our life ;  
And struggling through its error with  
vain strife,  
And stumbling in my weakness and my  
haste,  
And half bewildered by new forms, I past  
Seeking among those untaught foresters  
If I could find one form resembling hers,  
In which she might have masked her-  
self from me.  
There,—One, whose voice was venomed  
melody  
Sate by a well, under blue nightshade  
bowers ;  
The breath of her false mouth was like  
faint flowers,  
Her touch was as electric poison,—flame  
Out of her looks into my vitals came,  
And from her living cheeks and bosom  
flew  
A killing air, which pierced like honey-  
dew  
Into the core of my green heart, and lay  
Upon its leaves ; until, as hair grown gray  
O'er a young brow, they hid its unblown  
prime  
With ruins of unseasonable time.

In many mortal forms I rashly sought  
The shadow of that idol of my thought.  
And some were fair—but beauty dies  
away :  
Others were wise—but honeyed words  
betray :  
And One was true—oh ! why not true  
to me ?  
Then, as a hunted deer that could not  
flee,  
I turned upon my thoughts, and stood  
at bay,  
Wounded and weak and panting ; the  
cold day  
Trembled, for pity of my strife and pain.  
When, like a noonday dawn, there  
shone again  
Deliverance. One stood on my path  
who seemed  
As like the glorious shape which I had  
dreamed,

As is the Moon, whose changes ever run  
 Into themselves, to the eternal Sun ;  
 The cold chaste Moon, the Queen of  
 Heaven's bright isles,  
 Who makes all beautiful on which she  
 smiles,  
 That wandering shrine of soft yet icy  
 flame  
 Which ever is transformed, yet still the  
 same,  
 And warms not but illumines. Young  
 and fair  
 As the descended Spirit of that sphere,  
 She hid me, as the Moon may hide the  
 night  
 From its own darkness, until all was  
 bright  
 Between the Heaven and Earth of my  
 calm mind,  
 And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,  
 She led me to a cave in that wild place,  
 And sate beside me, with her downward  
 face  
 Illumining my slumbers, like the Moon  
 Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.  
 And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb.  
 And all my being became bright or dim  
 As the Moon's image in a summer sea,  
 According as she smiled or frowned on  
 me ;  
 And there I lay, within a chaste cold  
 bed :  
 ) Alas, I then was nor alive nor dead ;—  
 For at her silver voice came Death and  
 Life,  
 Unmindful each of their accustomed  
 strife,  
 Masked like twin babes, a sister and a  
 brother.  
 The wandering hopes of one abandoned  
 mother,  
 And through the cavern without wings  
 they flew,  
 And cried " Away, he is not of our  
 crew."  
 I wept, and though it be a dream, I  
 weep.

What storms then shook the ocean of  
 my sleep,  
 Blotting that Moon, whose pale and  
 waning lips  
 Then shrank as in the sickness of  
 eclipse ;—  
 And how my soul was as a lampless sea,  
 And who was then its Tempest ; and  
 when She,  
 The Planet of that hour, was quenched,  
 what frost

Crept o'er those waters, till from coast  
 to coast  
 The moving billows of my being fell  
 Into a death of ice, immovable ;—  
 And then—what earthquakes made it  
 gape and split,  
 The white Moon smiling all the while  
 on it,  
 These words conceal :—If not, each word  
 would be  
 The key of stanchless tears. Weep not  
 for me !

At length, into the obscure Forest  
 came  
 The Vision I had sought through grief  
 and shame.  
 Athwart that wintry wilderness of  
 thorns  
 Flashed from her motion splendor like  
 the Morn's  
 And from her presence life was radiated  
 Through the gray earth and branches  
 bare and dead ;  
 So that her way was paved, and roofed  
 above  
 With flowers as soft as thoughts of bud-  
 ding love ;  
 And music from her respiration spread  
 Like light,—all other sounds were pene-  
 trated  
 By the small, still, sweet spirit of that  
 sound,  
 So that the savage winds hung mute  
 around ;  
 And odors warm and fresh fell from her  
 hair,  
 Dissolving the dull cold in the frore air :  
 Soft as an Incarnation of the Sun,  
 When light is changed to love, this  
 glorious One  
 Floated into the cavern where I lay,  
 And called my Spirit, and the dreaming  
 clay  
 Was lifted by the thing that dreamed  
 below  
 As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's  
 glow  
 I stood, and felt the dawn of my long  
 night  
 Was penetrating me with living light :  
 I knew it was the Vision veiled from me  
 So many years—that it was Emily.

Twin Spheres of light who rule this  
 passive Earth,  
 This world of love, this *me* ; and into  
 birth [dart  
 Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and

Magnetic might into its central heart ;  
 And lift its billows and its mists, and  
     guide  
 By everlasting laws, each wind and tide  
 To its fit cloud, and its appointed cave ;  
 And lull its storms, each in the craggy  
     grave  
 Which was its cradle, luring to faint  
     bowers  
 The armies of the rainbow-winged  
     showers ;  
 And, as those married lights, which  
     from the towers  
 Of Heaven look forth and fold the wan-  
     dering globe  
 In liquid sleep and splendor, as a robe :  
 And all their many-mingled influence  
     blend,  
 If equal, yet unlike, to one sweet end ;—  
 So ye, bright regents, with alternate  
     sway  
 Govern my sphere of being, night and  
     day !  
 Thou, not disdaining even a borrowed  
     night :  
 Thou, not eclipsing a remoter light ;  
 And, through the shadow of the  
     seasons three,  
 From Spring to Autumn's sere maturity,  
 Light it into the Winter of the tomb,  
 Where it may ripen to a brighter bloom.  
 Thou too, O Comet beautiful and fierce,  
 Who drew the heart of this frail Uni-  
     verse  
 Towards thine own ; till, wrecked in  
     that convulsion,  
 Alternating attraction and repulsion,  
 Thine went astray and that was rent in  
     twain ;  
 Oh, float into our azure heaven again !  
 Be there love's folding-star at thy return ;  
 The living Sun will feed thee from its  
     urn                      [horn  
 Of golden fire ; the Moon will veil her  
 In thy last smiles ; adoring Even and  
     Morn  
 Will worship thee with incense of calm  
     breath  
 And lights and shadows ; as the star of  
     Death  
 And Birth is worshipped by those  
     sisters wild  
 Called Hope and Fear—upon the heart  
     are piled  
 Their offerings,—of this sacrifice divine  
 A world shall be the altar.  
                                     Lady mine,  
 Scorn not these flowers of thought, the  
     fading birth

Which from its heart of hearts that plant  
     puts forth  
 Whose fruit, made perfect by thy sunny  
     eyes,  
 Will be as of the trees of Paradise.

The day is come, and thou wilt fly  
     with me.  
 To whatsoever of dull mortality  
 Is mine, remain a vestal sister still ;  
 To the intense, the deep, the imperish-  
     able,  
 Not mine but me, henceforth be thou  
     united  
 Even as a bride, delighting and de-  
     lighted.  
 The hour is come :—the destined Star  
     has risen  
 Which shall descend upon a vacant  
     prison.  
 The walls are high, the gates are strong,  
     thick set  
 The sentinels—but true love never yet  
 Was thus constrained : it overleaps all  
     fence :  
 Like lightning, with invisible violence  
 Piercing its continents ; like Heaven's  
     free breath,  
 Which he who grasps can hold not ;  
     liker Death,  
 Who rides upon a thought, and makes  
     his way  
 Through temple, tower, and palace, and  
     the array  
 Of arms ; more strength has Love than  
     he or they :  
 For it can burst his charnel, and make  
     free  
 The limbs in chains, the heart in agony,  
 The soul in dust and chaos.

Emily,  
 A ship is floating in the harbor now.  
 A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's  
     brow :  
 There is a path on the sea's azure floor.  
 No keel has ever ploughed that path  
     before :  
 The halcyons brood around the foamless  
     isles :                      [wiles ;  
 The treacherous Ocean has forsworn its  
 The merry mariners are bold and free :  
 Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail  
     with me ?  
 Our bark is as an albatross, whose nest  
 Is a far Eden of the purple East ;  
 And we between her wings will sit,  
     while Night  
 And Day, and storm, and Calm, pursue  
     their flight,

Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,  
 Treading each other's heels, unheededly.  
 It is an Isle under Ionian skies,  
 Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,  
 And, for the harbors are not safe and  
 good,  
 This land would have remained a soli-  
 tude  
 But for some pastoral people native  
 there,  
 Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden  
 air  
 Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,  
 Simple and spirited; innocent and bold.  
 The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,  
 With ever-changing sound and light and  
 foam,  
 Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns  
 hoar;  
 And all the winds wandering along the  
 shore  
 Undulate with the undulating tide:  
 There are thick woods where sylvan  
 forms abide;  
 And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,  
 As clear as elemental diamond,  
 Or serene morning air; and far beyond,  
 The mossy tracks made by the goats  
 and deer  
 (Which the rough shepherd treads but  
 once a year),  
 Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers,  
 and halls  
 Built round with ivy, which the water-  
 falls  
 Illumining, with sound that never fails  
 Accompany the noonday nightingales;  
 And all the place is peopled with sweet  
 airs;  
 The light clear element which the isle  
 wears  
 Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,  
 Which floats like mist laden with unseen  
 showers  
 And falls upon the eyelids like faint  
 sleep;  
 And from the moss violets and jonquils  
 peep,  
 And dart their arrowy odor through the  
 brain  
 Till you might faint with that delicious  
 pain,  
 And every motion, odor, beam, and tone  
 With that deep music is in unison:  
 Which is a soul within the soul—they  
 seem  
 Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—  
 It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth,  
 and Sea,

Cradled, and hung in clear tranquility;  
 Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,  
 Washed by the soft blue Oceans of  
 young air,  
 It is a favored place. Famine or Blight,  
 Pestilence, War, and Earthquake, never  
 light  
 Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vul-  
 tures, they  
 Sail onward far upon their fatal way:  
 The winged storms, chanting their  
 thunder-psalm  
 To other lands, leave azure chasms of  
 calm  
 Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,  
 From which its fields and woods ever  
 renew  
 Their green and golden immortality.  
 And from the sea there rise, and from  
 the sky  
 There fall, clear exhalations, soft and  
 bright.  
 Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,  
 Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw  
 aside,  
 Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride  
 Glowing at once with love and loveli-  
 ness,  
 Blushes and trembles at its own excess:  
 Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less  
 Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,  
 An atom of th' Eternal, whose own  
 smile  
 Unfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen  
 O'er the gray rocks, blue waves, and  
 forests green,  
 Filling their bare and void interstices.—  
 But the chief marvel of the wilderness  
 Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or  
 how  
 None of the rustic island-people know;  
 'Tis not a tower of strength, though  
 with its height  
 It overtops the woods; but, for delight,  
 Some wise and tender Ocean-King, ere  
 crime  
 Had been invented, in the world's young  
 prime,  
 Reared it, a wonder of that simple time.  
 An envy of the isles, a pleasure-house  
 Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.  
 It scarce seems now a wreck of human  
 art,  
 But, as it were Titanic; in the heart  
 Of Earth having assumed its form, then  
 grown  
 Out of the mountains, from the living  
 stone.  
 Lifting itself in caverns light and high;



For all the antique and learned imagery  
Has been erased, and in the place of it  
The ivy and the wild-vine interknit  
The volumes of their many twining  
stems ;

Parasite flowers illume with dewy gems  
The lampless halls, and when they fade,  
the sky

Peeps through their winter-woof of  
tracery

With Moonlight patches, or star atoms  
keen,

Or fragments of the day's intense  
serene ;—

Working mosaic on their Parian floors.  
And, day and night, aloof, from the  
high towers

And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem  
To sleep in one another's arms, and dream  
Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks,  
and all that we

Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I  
have vowed

Thee to be lady of the solitude.—

And I have fitted up some chambers  
there

Looking towards the golden Eastern air,  
And level with the living winds, which  
flow

Like waves above the living waves  
below.—

I have sent books and music there, and  
all

Those instruments with which high  
spirits call

The future from its cradle, and the past  
Out of its grave, and make the present  
last

In thoughts and joys which sleep, but  
cannot die.

Folded within their own eternity.

Our simple life wants little, and true  
taste

Hires not the pale drudge Luxury, to  
waste

The scene it would adorn, and therefore  
still.

Nature with all her children, haunts the  
hill.

The ring-dove, in the embowering ivy,  
yet

Keeps up her love-lament, and the owls  
flit

Round the evening tower, and the young  
stars glance

Between the quick bats in their twilight  
dance ;

The spotted deer bask in the fresh  
moonlight

Before our gate, and the slow, silent  
night

Is measured by the pants of their calm  
sleep.

Be this our home in life, and when years  
heap

Their withered hours, like leaves, on  
our decay,

Let us become the overhanging day,

The living soul of this Elysian isle,

Conscious, inseparable, one. Meanwhile

We two will rise, and sit, and walk  
together,

Under the roof of blue Ionian weather,  
And wander in the meadows, or ascend

The mossy mountains, where the blue  
heavens bend

With lightest winds, to touch their para-  
mour :

Or linger, where the pebble-paven shore,  
Under the quick, faint kisses of the sea

Trembles and sparkles as with ecstasy,—  
Possessing and possessed by all that is

Within that calm circumference of bliss,  
And by each other, till to love and live

Be one :—or, at the noontide hour, arrive  
Where some old cavern hoar seems yet

to keep  
The moonlight of the expired night

asleep,  
Through which the awakened day can

never peep ;  
A veil for our seclusion, close as Night's.

Where secure sleep may kill thine  
innocent lights ;

Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love, the  
rain

Whose drops quench kisses till they  
burn again.

And we will talk, until thought's melody  
Become too sweet for utterance, and it

die  
In words, to live again in looks, which

dart  
With thrilling tone into the voiceless

heart,  
Harmonising silence without a sound.

Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms  
bound,

And our veins beat together ; and our  
lips

With other eloquence than words, eclipse  
The soul that burns between them, and

the wells  
Which boil under our being's inmost

cells,  
The fountains of our deepest life, shall be

Confused in passion's golden purity,  
 As mountain-springs under the morning  
 Sun.  
 We shall become the same, we shall be  
 one  
 Spirit within two frames, oh ! wherefore  
 two ?  
 One passion in twin-hearts, which grows  
 and grew,  
 Till like two meteors of expanding flame,  
 Those spheres instinct with it become  
 the same,  
 Touch, mingle, are transfigured ; ever  
 still  
 Burning, yet ever inconsumable :  
 In one another's substance finding food,  
 Like flames too pure and light and un-  
 imbued  
 To nourish their bright lives with baser  
 prey,  
 Which point to Heaven and cannot pass  
 away :  
 One hope within two wills, one will  
 beneath  
 Two overshadowing minds, one life, one  
 death,  
 One Heaven, one Hell, one immortality,  
 And one annihilation. Woe is me !  
 The winged words on which my soul  
 would pierce  
 Into the height of love's rare Universe,  
 Are chains of lead around its flight of  
 fire—  
 I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire !

Weak Verses, go, kneel at your  
 Sovereign's feet.  
 And say :—" We are the masters of thy  
 slave ;  
 What wouldst thou with us and ours  
 and thine ?"  
 Then call your sisters from Oblivion's  
 cave,  
 All singing loud : " Love's very pain is  
 sweet,  
 But its reward is in the world divine  
 Which, if not here, it builds beyond the  
 grave."  
 So shall ye live when I am there. Then  
 haste  
 Over the hearts of men, until ye meet  
 Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest.  
 And bid them love each other and be  
 blest ;  
 And leave the troop which errs, and  
 which reproves,  
 And come and be my guest,—for I am  
 Love's. 1821. 1821.

## TO NIGHT

SWIFTLY walk o'er the western wave,  
 Spirit of Night !  
 Out of thy misty eastern cave,  
 Where all the long and lone daylight,  
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
 Which make thee terrible and dear,—  
 Swift be thy flight !

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,  
 Star-inwrought !  
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day ;  
 Kiss her until she be wearied out,  
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land  
 Touching all with thine opiate wand—  
 Come, long sought !

When I arose and saw the dawn,  
 I sighed for thee ;  
 When light rode high, and the dew was  
 gone,  
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,  
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,  
 Lingered like an unloved guest,  
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,  
 Wouldst thou me ?  
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,  
 Murmured like a noontide bee,  
 Shall I nestle near thy side ?  
 Wouldst thou me ?—And I replied,  
 No, not thee !

Death will come when thou art dead  
 Soon, too soon—  
 Sleep will come when thou art fled ;  
 Of neither would I ask the boon  
 I ask of thee, beloved Night—  
 Swift be thine approaching flight,  
 Come soon, soon !

1821. 1824.

## TIME

UNFATHOMABLE Sea ! whose waves are  
 years,  
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep  
 woe  
 Are brackish with the salt of human  
 tears !  
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy  
 ebb and flow  
 Claspest the limits of mortality !  
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for  
 more,  
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable  
 shore ;

Treacherous in calm, and terrible in  
storm,  
Who shall put forth on thee,  
Unfathomable Sea? 1821. 1824.

# SONNET: POLITICAL GREATNESS

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,  
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in  
arms or arts,  
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny  
makes tame;  
Verse echoes not one beating of their  
hearts,  
History is but the shadow of their  
shame,  
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant  
starts  
As to oblivion their blind millions  
fleet,  
Staining that Heaven with obscene  
imagery  
Of their own likeness. What are  
numbers knit  
By force or custom? Man who man  
would be,  
Must rule the empire of himself; in it  
Must be supreme, establishing his  
throne  
On vanquished will, quelling the an-  
archy  
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.  
1821. 1824.

# MUTABILITY

THE flower that smiles to-day  
To-morrow dies;  
All that we wish to stay  
Tempt and then flies.  
What is this world's delight?  
Lightning that mocks the night,  
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!  
Friendship how rare!  
Love, how it sells poor bliss  
For proud despair!  
But we, though soon they fall,  
Survive their joy, and all  
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,  
Whilst flowers are gay,  
Whilst eyes that change ere night  
Make glad the day:  
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,  
Dream thou—and from thy sleep  
Then wake to weep.  
1821. 1824.

# A LAMENT

O world! O life! O time!  
On whose last steps I climb  
Trembling at that where I had stood  
before;  
When will return the glory of your  
prime?  
No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night  
A joy has taken flight;  
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter  
hoar,  
Move my faint heart with grief, but with  
delight  
No more—Oh, never more!  
1821. 1824.

# TO —

MUSIC, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory—  
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,  
Live within the sense they quicken,

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;  
And so thy thoughts, when thou art  
gone  
Love itself shall slumber on.  
1821. 1824.

# ADONAIIS

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS.  
AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC.

Ἀσπὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐν ζωῶσιν Ἐφ' ὧς  
Νῦν δὲ θανὼν λάμπεις Ἐσπερος ἐν ὀβριμνίαις.  
PLATO.

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!  
Oh weep for Adonais! though our tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear  
a head!  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all  
years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure  
compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow! Say:  
"With me  
Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall  
be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when  
he lay,  
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft  
which flies

! In darkness? where was lorn Urania  
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,  
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise  
She sate, while one, with soft enamored  
breath,  
Rekindled all the fading melodies  
With which, like flowers that mock  
the corse beneath,  
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk  
of death.

Oh weep for Adonais—he is dead!  
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and  
weep!  
Yet wherefore? Quench within their  
burning bed  
Thy fiery tears, and let thy lov'd heart  
keep,  
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining  
sleep;  
For he is gone, where all things wise  
and fair  
Descend;—oh, dream not that the am-  
orous Deep  
Will yet restore him to the vital air;  
Death feeds on his mute voice, and  
laughs at our despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again  
Lament anew, Urania!—He died,  
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,  
Blind, old, and lonely, when his  
country's pride,  
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,  
Trampled and mocked with many a  
loathed rite  
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,  
Into the gulf of death; but his clear  
Sprite  
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among  
the sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!  
Not all to that bright station dared to  
climb;  
And happier they their happiness who  
knew,  
Whose tapers yet burn through that  
night of time  
In which suns perished; others more  
sublime,  
Struck by the envious wrath of man  
or God,  
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent  
prime;  
And some yet live, treading the thorny  
road,  
Which leads, through toil and hate, to  
Fame's serene abode.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one  
has perished,  
The nursling of thy widowhood, who  
grew,  
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden  
cherished,  
And fed with true love tears, instead of  
dew;  
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!  
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and  
the last,  
The bloom, whose petals nipt before  
they blew  
Died on the promise of the fruit, is  
waste;  
The broken lily lies—the storm is over-  
past.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death  
Keeps his pale court in beauty and  
decay,  
He came; and bought, with price of  
purest breath,  
A grave among the eternal. — Come  
away!  
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian  
day  
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still  
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;  
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill:  
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all  
ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never  
more!—  
Within the twilight chamber spreads  
apace,  
The shadow of white Death, and at the  
door  
Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-  
place;  
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and  
awe  
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to  
deface  
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law  
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal  
curtain draw.

—  
Oh weep for Adonais! — The quick  
Dreams,  
The passion-winged Ministers of thought,  
Who were his flocks, whom near the  
living streams  
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he  
taught  
The love which was its music, wander  
not,—

Wander no more, from kindling brain to  
brain,  
But droop there, whence they sprung ;  
and mourn their lot  
Round the cold heart, where, after their  
sweet pain,  
They ne'er will gather strength, or find  
a home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps  
his cold head,  
And fans him with her moonlight wings,  
and cries ;  
“ Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not  
dead ;  
See, on the silken fringe of his faint  
eyes,  
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there  
lies

A tear some Dream has loosened from  
his brain.”

Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise !  
She knew not 'twas her own ; as with no  
stain  
She faded, like a cloud which had out-  
wept its rain.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
Washed his light limbs as if embalming  
them ;  
Another clipt her profuse locks, and  
threw  
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,  
Which frozen tears instead of pearls  
begem ;  
Another in her wilful grief would  
break  
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to  
stem  
A greater loss with one which was more  
weak ;  
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen  
cheek.

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,  
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw  
the breath  
Which gave it strength to pierce the  
guarded wit,  
And pass into the panting heart be-  
neath  
With lightning and with music : the  
damp death  
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips ;  
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath  
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold  
night clips,  
It flushed through his pale limbs, and  
passed to its eclipse.

And others came . . . Desires and  
Adorations,  
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled De-  
stinies,  
Splendors and Glooms, and glimmering  
Incarnations  
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phan-  
tasies ;  
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by  
the gleam  
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes.  
Came in slow pomp ;—the moving pomp  
might seem  
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal  
stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into  
thought,  
From shape, and hue, and odor, and  
sweet sound,  
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought  
Her eastern watchtower, and her hair  
unbound,  
Wet with the tears which should adorn  
the ground,  
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day ;  
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,  
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,  
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing  
in their dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless moun-  
tains,  
And feeds her grief with his remembered  
lay,  
And will no more reply to winds or  
fountains,  
Or amorous birds perched on the young  
green spray,  
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing  
day ;  
Since she can mimic not his lips, more  
dear  
Than those for whose disdain she pined  
away  
Into a shadow of all sounds :—a drear  
Murmur, between their songs, is all the  
woodmen hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and  
she threw down  
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn  
were,  
Or they dead leaves ; since her delight is  
flown  
For whom should she have waked the  
sullen year ?  
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear



Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both  
Thou Adonais: wan they stand and  
sere  
Amid the faint companions of their  
youth,  
With dew all turned to tears; odor, to  
sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,  
Mourns not her mate with such melodi-  
ous pain;  
Not so the eagle, who like thee could  
scale  
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's  
domain  
Her mighty youth with morning, doth  
complain,  
Soaring and screaming round her empty  
nest,  
As Albion wails for thee; the curse of  
Cain  
Light on his head who pierced thy inno-  
cent breast  
And scared the angel soul that was its  
earthly guest!

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and  
gone,  
But grief returns with the revolving  
year:  
The airs and streams renew their joyous  
tone;  
The ants, the bees, the swallows re-  
appear;  
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead  
Seasons' bier;  
The amorous birds now pair in every  
brake,  
And build their mossy homes in field and  
brere;  
And the green lizard, and the golden  
snake,  
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their  
trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and  
hill and Ocean  
A quickening life from the Earth's heart  
has burst  
As it has ever done, with change and  
motion,  
From the great morning of the world  
when first  
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream im-  
mersed  
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer  
light;  
All baser things pant with life's sacred  
thirst;

Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's  
delight,  
The beauty and the joy of their renewed  
might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit  
tender  
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;  
Like incarnations of the stars, when  
splendor  
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine  
death  
And mock the merry worm that wakes  
beneath;  
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone  
which knows  
Be as a sword consumed before the  
sheath  
By sightless lightning?—th' intense  
atom glows  
A moment, then is quenched in a most  
cold repose.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be  
But for our grief, as if it had not been,  
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!  
Whence are we, and why are we? of  
what scene  
The actors or spectators? Great and  
mean  
Meet massed in death, who lends what  
life must borrow,  
As long as skies are blue, and fields are  
green,  
Evening must usher night, night urge  
the morrow,  
Month follow month with woe, and year  
wake year to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!  
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "child-  
less Mother, rise  
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy  
heart's core,  
A wound more fierce than his with tears  
and sighs."  
And all the Dreams that watched  
Urania's eyes,  
And all the Echoes whom their sister's  
song  
Had held in holy silence, cried:  
"Arise!"  
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory  
stung,  
From her ambrosial rest the fading  
Splendor sprung.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that  
springs

Out of the East, and follows wild and drear  
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,  
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear  
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;  
So saddened round her like an atmosphere  
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way  
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,  
And human hearts, which to her airy tread  
Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:  
And barbéd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they  
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,  
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,  
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

In the death chamber for a moment Death  
Shamed by the presence of that living Might  
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath  
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light  
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.  
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,  
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!  
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress  
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;  
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;  
And in my heartless breast and burning brain  
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive.  
With food of saddest memory kept alive,  
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part  
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give

All that I am to be as thou now art!  
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,  
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men  
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart  
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?  
Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then  
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?  
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when  
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,  
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;  
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;  
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true  
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,  
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,  
When like Apollo, from his golden bow,  
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped  
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,  
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;  
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
Is gathered into death without a dawn.  
And the immortal stars awake again:  
So is it in the world of living men:  
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight  
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when  
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light  
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,  
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;  
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame  
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,  
An early but enduring monument,  
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song

In sorrow ; from her wilds Ierne sent  
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,  
And love taught grief to fall like music  
from his tongue.

Midst others of less note, came one  
frail Form,  
A phantom among men ; companionless  
As the last cloud of an expiring storm  
Whose thunder is its knell ; he, as I  
guess,  
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,  
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray  
With feeble steps o'er the world's wil-  
derness,  
And his own thoughts, along that rugged  
way,  
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father  
and their prey.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—  
A Love in desolation masked ;—a Power  
Girt round with weakness ;—it can  
scarce uplift  
The weight of the superincumbent hour ;  
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,  
A breaking billow ;—even whilst we  
speak  
Is it not broken ? On the withering  
flower  
The killing sun smiles brightly : on a  
cheek  
The life can burn in blood, even while  
the heart may break.

His head was bound with pansies over-  
blown,  
And faded violets, white, and pied, and  
blue ;  
And a light spear topped with a cypress  
cone,  
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses  
grew  
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday  
dew,  
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
Shook the weak hand that grasped it ;  
of that crew  
He came the last, neglected and apart ;  
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the  
hunter's dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan  
Smiled through their tears ; well knew  
that gentle band  
Who in another's fate now wept his own ;  
As in the accents of an unknown land,  
He sung new sorrow ; sad Urania  
scanned

The Stranger's mien, and murmured :  
" Who art thou ? "

He answered not, but with a sudden  
hand  
Made bare his branded and ensanguined  
brow,  
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—oh,  
that it should be so !

What softer voice is hushed over the  
dead ?  
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle  
thrown ?  
What form leans sadly o'er the white  
deathbed,  
In mockery of monumental stone,  
The heavy heart heaving without a  
moan ?  
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,  
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the  
departed one ;  
Let me not vex, with inharmonious  
sighs  
The silence of that heart's accepted  
sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh !  
What deaf and viperous murderer could  
crown  
Life's early cup with such a draught of  
woe ?  
The nameless worm would now itself  
disown :  
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone  
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and  
wrong,  
But what was howling in one breast  
alone,  
Silent with expectation of the song,  
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver  
lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy  
fame !  
Live ! fear no heavier chastisement from  
me,  
Thou noteless blot on a remembered /  
name !  
But be thyself, and know thyself to be !  
And ever at thy season be thou free  
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er-  
flow :  
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling  
to thee ;  
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret  
brow,  
And like a beaten hound tremble thou  
shalt—as now.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the note on page 264.



Nor let us weep that our delight is fled  
Far from these carrion kites that scream  
below ;  
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring  
dead ;  
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting  
now.—  
Dust to the dust ! but the pure spirit  
shall flow  
Back to the burning fountain whence  
it came,  
A portion of the Eternal, which must  
glow  
Through time and change, unquench-  
ably the same,  
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid  
hearth of shame.

Peace, peace ! he is not dead, he doth  
not sleep—  
He hath awakened from the dream of  
life—

'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep  
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,  
And in mad trance, strike with our  
spirit's knife  
Invulnerable nothings.—We decay  
Like corpses in a charnel ; fear and grief  
Convulse us and consume us day by day,  
And cold hopes swarm like worms with-  
in our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our  
night ;  
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,  
And that unrest which men miscall de-  
light,  
Can touch him not and torture not again ;  
From the contagion of the world's slow  
stain  
He is secure, and now can never mourn  
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray  
in vain ;  
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to  
burn,  
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented  
urn.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead,  
not he ;  
Mourn not for Adonais,—Thou young  
Dawn [thee  
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from  
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone ;  
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan !  
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains,  
and thou Air  
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf  
hadst thrown

O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it  
bare  
Even to the joyous stars which smile on  
its despair !

He is made one with Nature : there is  
heard  
His voice in all her music, from the moan  
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet  
bird ;  
He is a presence to be felt and known  
In darkness and in light, from herb and  
stone,  
Spreading itself where'er that Power  
may move  
Which has withdrawn his being to its  
own ;  
Which wiolds the world with never  
wearied love,  
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it  
above.

He is a portion of the loveliness  
Which once he made more lovely : he  
doth bear  
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic  
stress  
Sweeps through the dull dense world,  
compelling there  
All new successions to the forms they  
wear ;  
Torturing th' unwilling dross that  
checks its flight  
To its own likeness, as each mass may  
bear ;  
And bursting in its beauty and its might  
From trees and beasts and men into the  
Heaven's light.

The splendors of the firmament of time  
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished  
not ;  
Like stars to their appointed height  
they climb  
And death is a low mist which cannot  
blot  
The brightness it may veil. When lofty  
thought  
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,  
And love and life contend in it, for what  
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live  
there  
And move like winds of light on dark  
and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
Rose from their thrones, built beyond  
mortal thought,  
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton

Rose pale, his solemn agony had not  
 Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he  
     fought  
 And as he fell and as he lived and loved  
 Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
 Arose; and Lucan, by his death  
     approved:  
 Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing  
     reproved.

And many more, whose names on Earth  
     are dark  
 But whose transmitted effluence cannot  
     die  
 So long as fire outlives the parent spark,  
 Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.  
 "Thou art become as one of us," they  
     cry,  
 "It was for thee yon kingless sphere  
     has long  
 Swung blind in unascended majesty,  
 Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.  
 Assume thy wingéd throne, thou Vesper  
     of our throng!"

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come  
     forth  
 Fond wretch! and know thyself and  
     him aright.  
 Clasp with thy panting soul the  
     pendulous Earth;  
 As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light  
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious  
     might  
 Sate the void circumference: then  
     shrink  
 Even to a point within our day and  
     night;  
 And keep thy heart light lest it make  
     thee sink  
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured  
     thee to the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre  
 Oh! not of him, but of our joy: 'tis  
     nought  
 That ages, empires, and religions there  
 Lie buried in the ravage they have  
     wrought;  
 For such as he can lend,—they borrow  
     not  
 Glory from those who made the world  
     their prey;  
 And he is gathered to the kings of  
     thought  
 Who waged contention with their time's  
     decay,  
 And of the past are all that cannot pass  
     away.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,  
 The grave, the city, and the wilderness;  
 And where its wrecks like shattered  
     mountains rise,  
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant  
     copses dress  
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness,  
 Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead  
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access  
 Where, like an infant's smile, over the  
     dead  
 A light of laughing flowers along the  
     grass is spread.

And gray walls moulder round, on which  
     dull Time  
 Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;  
 And one keen pyramid with wedge sub-  
     lime,  
 Pavilioning the dust of him who planned  
 This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
 Like flame transformed to marble; and  
     beneath,  
 A field is spread, on which a newer band  
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their  
     camp of death  
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce ex-  
     tinguished breath.

Here pause: these graves are all too  
     young as yet  
 To have outgrown the sorrow which  
     consigned  
 Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,  
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning  
     mind,  
 Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou  
     find [home,  
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest  
 Of tears and gall. From the world's  
     bitter wind  
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
 What Adonais is, why fear we to be-  
     come?

The One remains, the many change and  
     pass;  
 Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's  
     shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.  
     —Die,  
 If thou wouldst be with that which  
     thou dost seek!  
 Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure  
     sky, [are weak  
 Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words,  
 The glory they transfuse with fitting  
     truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,  
my Heart ?

Thy hopes are gone before : from all  
things here

They have departed ; thou shouldst now  
depart !

A light is past from the revolving year,  
And man, and woman ; and what still  
is dear

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee  
wither.

The soft sky smiles,—the low wind  
whispers near ;

'Tis Adonais calls ! oh, hasten thither,  
No more let Life divide what Death can  
join together.

That Light whose smile kindles the  
Universe,

That Beauty in which all things work  
and move,

That Benediction which the eclipsing  
Curse

Of birth can quench not, that sustain-  
ing Love

Which through the web of being blindly  
wove

By man and beast and earth and air and  
sea,

Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
The fire for which all thirst ; now beams  
on me,

Consuming the last clouds of cold  
mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked  
in song

Descends on me ; my spirit's bark is  
driven,

Far from the shore, far from the trem-  
bling throng

Whose sails were never to the tempest  
given ;

The massy earth and spherèd skies are  
riven !

I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar ;  
Whilst burning through the inmost veil  
of Heaven,

The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
Beacons from the abode where the  
Eternal are. 1821. 1821.

#### LIFE MAY CHANGE, BUT IT MAY FLY NOT

LIFE may change, but it may fly not ;  
Hope may vanish, but can die not ;  
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth ;  
Love repulsed,—but it returneth !

Yet were life a charnel where  
Hope lay confined with Despair ;  
Yet were truth a sacred lie,  
Love were lust—If Liberty

Lent not life its soul of light,  
Hope its iris of delight,  
Truth its prophet's robe to wear,  
Love its power to give and bear,

From *Hellas*. 1821. 1822.

#### WORLDS ON WORLDS ARE ROLL- ING EVER

WORLDS on worlds are rolling ever  
From creation to decay,  
Like the bubbles on a river  
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.  
But they are still immortal  
Who, through birth's orient port  
And death's dark chasm hurrying to  
fro,  
Clothe their unceasing flight  
In the brief dust and light  
Gathered around their chariots as they  
go ;  
New shapes they still may weave  
New gods, new laws receive,  
Bright or dim are they as the robes they  
last  
On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A power from the unknown God,  
A Promethean conqueror came ;  
Like a triumphal path he trod  
The thorns of death and shame.  
A mortal shape to him  
Was like the vapor dim  
Which the orient planet animates with  
light ;  
Hell, Sin, and Slavery came,  
Like bloodhounds mild and tame,  
Nor preyed, until their Lord had taken  
flight ;  
The moon of Mahomet  
Arose, and it shall set ;  
While blazoned as on heaven's immortal  
noon  
The cross leads generations on.

Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep  
From one whose dreams are Paradise  
Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to  
weep,  
And day peers forth with her blank  
eyes ;  
So fleet, so faint, so fair,  
The Powers of earth and air  
Fled from the folding star of Bethlehem

Apollo, Pan, and Love,  
And even Olympian Jove  
Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared  
on them;  
Our hills and seas and streams  
Dispeopled of their dreams,  
Their waters turned to blood, their dew  
to tears,  
Wailed for the golden years.  
From *Hellas*. 1821. 1822.

## SONGS FROM HELLAS

DARKNESS has dawned in the East  
On the noon of time:  
The death-birds descend to their feast,  
From the hungry clime.  
Let Freedom and Peace flee far  
To a sunnier strand,  
And follow Love's folding star  
To the Evening land!

The young moon has fed  
Her exhausted horn,  
With the sunset's fire:  
The weak day is dead,  
But the night is not born;  
And, like loveliness panting with wild  
desire [light,  
While it trembles with fear and de-  
Hesperus flies from awakening night,  
And pants in its beauty and speed with  
light  
Fast flashing, soft, and bright.  
Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the  
free!  
Guide us far, far away,  
To climes where now veiled by the  
ardor of day  
Thou art hidden  
From waves on which weary noon  
Faints in her summer swoon,  
Between Kingless continents sinless  
as Eden, [lably  
Around mountains and islands invio-  
Prankt on the sapphire sea.

Through the sunset of hope,  
Like the shapes of a dream,  
What Paradise islands of glory  
gleam!  
Beneath Heaven's cope,  
Their shadows more clear float by —  
The sound of their oceans, the light  
of their sky,  
The music and fragrance their soli-  
tudes breathe  
Burst, like morning on dream, or like  
Heaven on death

Through the walls of our prison:  
And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!  
1821. 1822.

THE WORLD'S GREAT AGE BEGINS  
ANEW

THE world's great age begins anew,  
The golden years return,  
The earth doth like a snake renew  
Her winter weeds outworn:  
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires  
gleam,  
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter *Hellas* rears its mountains  
From waves serener far;  
A new Peneus rolls his fountains  
Against the morning star.  
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep  
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,  
Fraught with a later prize;  
Another Orpheus sings again,  
And loves, and weeps, and dies.  
A new Ulysses leaves once more  
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,  
If earth Death's scroll must be!  
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy  
Which dawns upon the free:  
Although a subtler Sphinx renew  
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,  
And to remoter time  
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,  
The splendor of its prime;  
And leave, if nought so bright may live,  
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose  
Shall burst, more bright and good  
Than all who fell, than One who rose,  
Than many unsubdued:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Saturn and Love* were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence and happiness. All those who fell, or the Gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; the *One who rose*, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the Pagan World were amerced of their worship; and the many unsubdued, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic Islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing activity. (*From Shelley's Note.*)

Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,  
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?  
Cease! must men kill and die?  
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn  
Of bitter prophecy.  
The world is weary of the past,  
Oh, might it die or rest at last!  
Final Chorus from *Hellas*.

#### TO-MORROW

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow?  
When young and old and strong and  
weak,  
Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,  
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—  
In thy place—ah! well-a-day!  
We find the thing we fled—To-day.  
1821. 1824.

#### TO——

ONE word is too often profaned  
For me to profane it,  
One feeling too falsely disdained  
For thee to disdain it.  
One hope is too like despair  
For prudence to smother,  
And pity from thee more dear  
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,  
But wilt thou accept not  
The worship the heart lifts above  
And the Heavens reject not,  
The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow?  
1821. 1824.

#### WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE

ARIEL to Miranda.—Take  
This slave of Music, for the sake  
Of him who is the slave of thee,  
And teach it all the harmony  
In which thou canst, and only thou,  
Make the delighted spirit glow,  
Till joy denies itself again,  
And, too intense, is turned to pain;  
For by permission and command  
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,  
Poor Ariel sends this silent token  
Of more than ever can be spoken;  
Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who,

From life to life, must still pursue  
Your happiness;—for thus alone  
Can Ariel ever find his own.  
From Prospero's enchanted cell,  
As the mighty verses tell,  
To the throne of Naples, he  
Lit you o'er the trackless sea,  
Flitting on, your prow before,  
Like a living meteor.  
When you die, the silent Moon,  
In her interlunar swoon,  
Is not sadder in her cell  
Than deserted Ariel.  
When you live again on earth,  
Like an unseen star of birth,  
Ariel guides you o'er the sea  
Of life from your nativity.  
Many changes have been run,  
Since Ferdinand and you begun  
Your course of love, and Ariel still  
Has tracked your steps, and served  
your will;

Now, in humbler, happier lot,  
This is all remembered not;  
And now, alas! the poor sprite is  
Imprisoned, for some fault of his,  
In a body like a grave;—  
From you he only dares to crave,  
For his service and his sorrow,  
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,  
To echo all harmonious thought,  
Felled a tree, while on the steep  
The woods were in their winter sleep,  
Rocked in that repose divine  
On the wind-swept Apennine;  
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,  
And some of Spring approaching fast,  
And some of April buds and showers,  
And some of songs in July bowers,  
And all of love; and so this tree,—  
Oh that such our death may be!—  
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,  
To live in happier form again:  
From which, beneath Heaven's fairest  
star,

The artist wrought this loved Guitar,  
And taught it justly to reply,  
To all who question skilfully,  
In language gentle as thine own;  
Whispering in enamored tone  
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,  
And summer winds in sylvan cells;  
For it had learnt all harmonies  
Of the plains and of the skies,  
Of the forests and the mountains,  
And the many-voiced fountains;  
The clearest echoes of the hills,

softest notes of falling rills,  
 melodies of birds and bees,  
 murmuring of summer seas,  
 pattering rain, and breathing dew  
 airs of evening; and it knew  
 ; seldom-heard mysterious sound,  
 oh, driven on its diurnal round,  
 t floats through boundless day,  
 world enkindles on its way—  
 his it knows, but will not tell  
 those who cannot question well  
 spirit that inhabits it;  
 lks according to the wit  
 s companions; and no more  
 ard than has been felt before,  
 those who tempt it to betray  
 e secrets of an elder day:  
 sweetly as its answers will  
 ter hands of perfect skill,  
 eeps its highest, holiest tone  
 our beloved Jane alone.

1822. 1832-1833.

SONNETS: "WHEN THE LAMP IS  
 SHATTERED"

WHEN the lamp is shattered  
 light in the dust lies dead—  
 when the cloud is scattered  
 rainbow's glory is shed.  
 when the lute is broken,  
 et tones are remembered not;  
 when the lips have spoken,  
 ed accents are soon forgot.

; music and splendor  
 ive not the lamp and the lute,  
 e heart's echoes render  
 ong when the spirit is mute:—  
 o song but sad dirges,  
 : the wind through a ruined cell,  
 : the mournful surges  
 ; ring the dead seaman's knell.

24

When hearts have once mingled  
 Love first leaves the well-built nest,  
 The weak one is singled  
 To endure what it once possessed.  
 O Love! who bewailest  
 The frailty of all things here,  
 Why choose you the frailest  
 For your cradle, your home, and your  
 bier?

Its passions will rock thee  
 As the storms rock the ravens on high:  
 Bright reason will mock thee,  
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.  
 From thy nest every rafter  
 Will rot, and thine eagle home  
 Leave thee naked to laughter,  
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.  
 1822. 1824.

SONG FROM CHARLES THE FIRST

A WIDOW bird sate mourning for her  
 love  
 Upon a wintry bough;  
 The frozen wind crept on above,  
 The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
 No flower upon the ground,  
 And little motion in the air  
 Except the mill-wheel's sound.  
 1822. 1824.

A DIRGE

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud  
 Grief too sad for song;  
 Wild wind, when sullen cloud  
 Knells all the night long;  
 Sad storm, whose tears are vain,  
 Bare woods, whose branches strain,  
 Deep caves and dreary main,  
 Wail, for the world's wrong!  
 1822. 1824.

# KEATS

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## KEATS

### IMITATION OF SPENSER<sup>1</sup>

Now Morning from her orient chamber  
came,  
And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant  
hill;  
Crowning its lawny crest with amber  
flame,  
Silv'ring the untainted gushes of its rill;  
Which, pure from mossy beds, did down  
distill,  
And after parting beds of simple flowers,  
By many streams a little lake did fill,  
Which round its marge reflected woven  
bowers,  
And, in its middle space, a sky that never  
lowers.

There the king-fisher saw his plumage  
bright  
Vieing with fish of brilliant dye below;  
Whose silken fins, and golden scales  
light  
Cast upward, through the waves, a ruby  
glow:  
There saw the swan his neck of arched  
snow,  
And oar'd himself along with majesty;  
Sparkled his jetty eyes; his feet did  
show  
Beneath the waves like Afric's ebony,  
And on his back a fay reclined volup-  
tuously.

Ah! could I tell the wonders of an isle  
That in that fairest lake had placed  
been,  
I could e'en Dido of her grief beguile;  
Or rob from aged Lear his bitter teen:  
For sure so fair a place was never seen,  
Of all that ever charm'd romantic eye:

<sup>1</sup> "It was the *Faerie Queene* that awakened his genius. In Spenser's fairy-land he was enchanted, breathed in a new world, and became another being; till, enamored of the stanza, he attempted to imitate it, and succeeded. . . . This, his earliest attempt, the 'Imitation of Spenser', is in his first volume of poems." (Quoted by Colvin from the Houghton MSS.)

It seem'd an emerald in the silver sheen  
Of the bright waters; or as when on  
high,  
Through clouds of fleecy white, laughs  
the cerulean sky.

And all around it dipp'd luxuriously  
Sloping of verdure through the glossy  
tide,  
Which, as it were in gentle amity,  
Rippled delighted up the flowery side;  
As if to glean the ruddy tears, it tried,  
Which fell profusely from the rose-tree  
stem!  
Haply it was the workings of its pride,  
In strife to throw upon the shore a gem  
Outvieing all the buds in Flora's diadem.  
*1813 or 1814. 1817.*<sup>1</sup>

### TO SOLITUDE

O SOLITUDE! if I must with thee dwell,  
Let it not be among the jumbled heap  
Of murky buildings; climb with me the  
steep,—  
Nature's observatory—whence the dell.  
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell  
May seem a span; let me thy vigils keep  
'Mongst boughs pavilion'd where the  
deer's swift leap  
Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove  
bell.  
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes  
with thee,  
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent  
mind,  
Whose words are images of thoughts  
refin'd,  
Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be  
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,  
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits  
flee. *1815. May 5, 1816.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The dates for Keats's poems are made up from Sidney Colvin's careful study of the order of composition of the poems, in his *Life of Keats*, and from H. Buxton Forman's excellent notes in his edition of Keats's Works.

<sup>2</sup> In Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*. Probably the first lines of Keats ever printed.

# HOW MANY BARDS GILD THE LAPSES OF TIME

How many bards gild the lapses of time!  
A few of them have ever been the food  
Of my delighted fancy,—I could brood  
Over their beauties, earthly, or sublime:  
And often, when I sit me down to rhyme,  
These will in throngs before my mind  
intrude:

But no confusion, no disturbance rude  
Do they occasion: 'tis a pleasing chime.  
So the unnumber'd sounds that evening  
store;

The songs of birds—the whisp'ring of the  
leaves—

The voice of waters—the great bell that  
heaves

With solemn sound,—and thousand  
others more,

That distance of recognizance bereaves,  
Make pleasing music, and not wild up-  
pour. *1816. 1817.*

# KEEN, FITFUL GUSTS ARE WHIS- PERING HERE AND THERE

KEEN, fitful gusts are whispering here  
and there

Among the bushes half leafless, and dry;  
The stars look very cold about the sky.

And I have many miles on foot to fare.  
Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,

Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,  
Or of those silver lamps that burn on  
high,

Or of the distance from home's pleasant  
lair:

For I am brimful of the friendliness  
That in a little cottage I have found;

Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,  
And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd;

Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,  
And faithful Petrarch gloriously  
crown'd. *1816. 1817.*

# TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent  
Tis very sweet to look into the fair

And open face of heaven,—to breathe a  
prayer

Full in the smile of the blue firmament.  
Who is more happy, when, with heart's  
content,

Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair  
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair

And gentle tale of love and languishment?  
Returning home at evening, with an ear  
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye  
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright  
career.

He mourns that day so soon has glided  
by:

E'en like the passage of an angel's tear  
That falls through the clear ethers silently.

*June, 1816. 1817.*

# ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAP- MAN'S HOMER

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of  
gold,

And many goodly states and kingdoms  
seen;

Round many western islands have I  
been

Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told

That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his  
demesne;

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud  
and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the  
skies

When a new planet swims into his ken;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle  
eyes

He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild sur-  
mise—

Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

*1816. Dec. 1, 1816.*

# GREAT SPIRITS NOW ON EARTH ARE SOJOURNING

GREAT spirits now on earth are sojourn-  
ing;

He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide  
awake,

Catches his freshness from Archangel's  
wing;

He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's  
sake:

And lo!—whose steadfastness would  
never take

A meaner sound than Raphael's whis-  
pering.

And other spirits there are standing  
apart

Upon the forehead of the age to come;

These, these will give the world another heart  
 And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
 Of mighty workings in the human mart?  
 Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.  
*November, 1816. 1817.*

#### ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead :  
 When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,  
 And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
 From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead ;  
 That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead  
 In summer luxury,—he has never done  
 With his delights; for when tired out with fun  
 He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.  
 The poetry of earth is ceasing never ;  
 On a lone winter evening, when the frost  
 Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills  
 The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,  
 And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,  
 The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills. *December 30, 1816. 1817.*

#### SLEEP AND POETRY

"As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete  
 "Was unto me, but why that I ne might  
 "Rest I ne wist, for there n'as erthly wight  
 " [As I suppose] had more of hertis ese  
 "Than I, for I n'ad sicknesse nor disese."  
 CHAUCER.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in summer?  
 What is more soothing than the pretty hummer  
 That stays one moment in an open flower,  
 And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?  
 What is more tranquil than a musk-rose blowing  
 In a green island, far from all men's knowing?  
 More healthful than the leafiness of dales?

More secret than a nest of nightingales?  
 More serene than Cordelia's countenance?  
 More full of visions than a high romance?  
 What, but thee, Sleep? Soft closer of our eyes!  
 Low murmurer of tender lullabies!  
 Light hoverer around our happy pillows!  
 Wreather of poppy buds, and weeping willows!  
 Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!  
 Most happy listener! when the morning blesses  
 Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes  
 That glance so brightly at the new sunrise.

But what is higher beyond thought than thee?  
 Fresher than berries of a mountain tree?  
 More strange, more beautiful, more smooth, more regal,  
 Than wings of swans, than doves, than dim-seen eagle?  
 What is it? And to what shall I compare it?  
 It has a glory, and nought else can share it:  
 The thought thereof is awful, sweet, and holy,  
 Chasing away all worldliness and folly:  
 Coming sometimes like fearful claps of thunder,  
 Or the low-rumblings earth's regions under;  
 And sometimes like a gentle whispering  
 Of all the secrets of some wondrous thing  
 That breathes about us in the vacant air:  
 So that we look around with prying stare,  
 Perhaps to see shapes of light, aerial limning,  
 And catch soft floatings from a faint-heard hymning;  
 To see the laurel wreath, on high suspended,  
 That is to crown our name when life is ended.  
 Sometimes it gives a glory to the voice,  
 And from the heart up-springs, rejoice! rejoice!  
 Sounds which will reach the Framer of all things,  
 And die away in ardent mutterings.

No one who once the glorious sun has  
 seen  
 And all the clouds, and felt his bosom  
 clean  
 For his great Maker's presence, but must  
 know  
 What 'tis I mean, and feel his being  
 glow :  
 Therefore no insult will I give his spirit,  
 By telling what he sees from native  
 merit.

O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen  
 That am not yet a glorious denizen  
 Of thy wide heaven—Should I rather  
 kneel

Upon some mountain-top until I feel  
 A glowing splendor round about me  
 hung,  
 And echo back the voice of thine own  
 tongue ?

O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen  
 That am not yet a glorious denizen  
 Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent  
 prayer,

Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air,  
 Smoothed for intoxication by the breath  
 Of flowering bays, that I may die a  
 death

Of luxury, and my young spirit follow  
 The morning sun-beams to the great  
 Apollo

Like a fresh sacrifice ; or if I can bear  
 The o'erwhelming sweets, 'twill bring  
 me to the fair

Visions of all places : a bowery nook  
 Will be elysium—an eternal book  
 Whence I may copy many a lovely saying  
 About the leaves, and flowers—about  
 the playing

Of nymphs in woods, and fountains ; and  
 the shade

Keeping a silence round a sleeping  
 maid

And many a verse from so strange in-  
 fluence

That we must ever wonder how, and  
 whence

It came. Also imaginings will hover  
 Round my fireside, and haply there dis-  
 cover

Vistas of solemn beauty, where I'd  
 wander

In happy silence, like the clear meander  
 Through its lone vales ; and where I  
 found a spot

Of awfuller shade, or an enchanted grot,  
 Or a green hill o'erspread with chequered  
 dress

Of flowers, and fearful from its love-  
 liness,

Write on my tablets all that was per-  
 mitted,

All that was for our human senses fitted.  
 Then the events of this wide world I'd  
 seize

Like a strong giant, and my spirit tease  
 Till at its shoulders it should proudly see  
 Wings to find out an immortality.

Stop and consider ! life is but a day :  
 A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way  
 From a tree's summit ; a poor Indian's  
 sleep

While his boat hastens to the monstrous  
 steep

Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan ?  
 Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown ;  
 The reading of an ever-changing tale ;  
 The light uplifting of a maiden's veil ;  
 A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air ;  
 A laughing school-boy, without grief or  
 care

Riding the springy branches of an elm.

O for ten years, that I may overwhelm  
 Myself in poesy ; so I may do the deed  
 That my own soul has to itself decreed.  
 Then I will pass the countries that I see  
 In long perspective, and continually  
 Taste their pure fountains. First the  
 realm I'll pass

Of Flora, and old Pan ; sleep in the grass,  
 Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,  
 And choose each pleasure that my fancy  
 sees ;

Catch the white-handed nymphs in  
 shady places,

To woo sweet kisses from averted  
 faces,—

Play with their fingers, touch their  
 shoulders white

Into a pretty shrinking with a bite  
 As hard as lips can make it : till agreed,

A lovely tale of human life we'll read.  
 And one will teach a tame dove how it  
 best

May fan the cool air gently o'er my rest ;  
 Another, bending o'er her nimble tread,

Will set a green robe floating round her  
 head,

And still will dance with ever varied  
 ease.

Smiling upon the flowers and the trees :  
 Another will entice me on, and on

Through almond blossoms and rich cin-  
 namon ;

Till in the bosom of a leafy world

We rest in silence, like two gems up-curl'd  
In the recesses of a pearly shell.

And can I ever bid these joys farewell?  
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,  
Where I may find the agonies, the strife  
Of human hearts: for lo! I see afar,  
O'er-sailing the blue cragginess, a car  
And steeds with streamy manes—the  
charioteer

Looks out upon the winds with glorious  
fear:

And now the numerous tramlings  
quiver lightly

Along a huge cloud's ridge; and now  
with sprightly

Wheel downward come they into fresher  
skies,

Tipt round with silver from the sun's  
bright eyes.

Still downward with capacious whirl  
they glide;

And now I see them on a green-hill's  
side

In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.  
The charioteer with wond'rous gesture  
talks

To the trees and mountains; and there  
soon appear

Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,  
Passing along before a dusky space

Made, by some mighty oaks: as they  
would chase

Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.  
Lo! how they murmur, laugh, and  
smile, and weep:

Some with upholden hand and mouth  
severe;

Some with their faces muffled to the ear  
Between their arms; some, clear in  
youthful bloom,

Go glad and smilingly athwart the  
gloom;

Some looking back, and some with up-  
ward gaze;

Yes, thousands in a thousand different  
ways

Flit onward—now a lovely wreath of  
girls

Dancing their sleek hair into tangled  
curls;

And now broad wings. Most awfully  
intent

The driver of those steeds is forward  
bent,

And seems to listen: O that I might  
know [glow.

All that he writes with such a hurrying

The visions all are fled—the car is fled  
Into the light of heaven, and in their  
stead

A sense of real things comes doubly  
strong,

And, like a muddy stream, would bear  
along

My soul to nothingness: but I will strive  
Against all doubtings, and will keep  
alive

The thought of that same chariot, and  
the strange

Journey it went.

Is there so small a range

In the present strength of manhood, that  
the high

Imagination cannot freely fly

As she was wont of old? prepare her  
steeds,

Paw up against the light, and do strange  
deeds

Upon the clouds? Has she not shewn us  
all?

From the clear space of ether, to the  
small

Breath of new buds unfolding? From  
the meaning

Of Jove's large eye-brow, to the tender  
greening

Of April meadows? Here her altar  
shone,

E'en in this isle; and who could paragon  
The fervid choir that lifted up a noise

Of harmony, to where it aye will poise  
Its mighty self of convoluting sound,

Huge as a planet, and like that roll  
round,

Eternally around a dizzy void?

Ay, in those days the Muses were nigh  
cloy'd

With honors; nor had any other care  
Than to sing out and soothe their wavy  
hair.

Could all this be forgotten? Yes, a  
schism

Nurtured by foppery and barbarism.

Made great Apollo blush for this his  
land.

Men were thought wise who could not  
understand

His glories: with a puling infant's force  
They sway'd about upon a rocking horse.

And thought it Pegasus. Ah dismal  
soul'd!

The winds of heaven blew, the ocean  
roll'd [blue

Its gathering waves—ye felt it not. The



Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew  
Of summer nights collected still to make  
The morning precious: beauty was  
awake!

Why were ye not awake? But ye were  
dead

To things ye knew not of,—were closely  
wed

To musty laws lined out with wretched  
rule

And compass vile: so that ye taught a  
school

Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and  
fit,

Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's  
wit,

Their verses tallied. Easy was the task:  
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the  
mask

Of Poesy. Ill-fated, impious race!  
That blasphemed the bright Lyrist to his  
face,

And did not know it,—no, they went  
about,

Holding a poor, decrepit standard out  
Mark'd with most flimsy mottoes, and in  
large

The name of one Boileau!

O ye whose charge  
It is to hover round our pleasant hills!

Whose congregated majesty so fills  
My boundly reverence, that I cannot  
trace

Your hallowed names, in this unholy  
place,

So near those common folk; did not  
their shames

Affright you? Did our old lamenting  
Thames

Delight you? Did ye never cluster  
round

Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,  
And weep? Or did ye wholly bid adieu

To regions where no more the laurel  
grew?

Or did ye stay to give a welcoming  
To some lone spirits who could proudly  
sing

Their youth away, and die? 'Twas even  
so:

But let me think away those times of  
woe:

Now 'tis a fairer season; ye have  
breathed

Rich benedictions o'er us; ye have  
wreathed

Fresh garlands: for sweet music has  
been heard

In many places;—some has been up-  
stirr'd

From out its crystal dwelling in a lake,  
By a swan's ebon bill; from a thick  
brake,

Nested and quiet in a valley mild,  
Bubbles a pipe; fine sounds are floating  
wild

About the earth: happy are ye and glad.

These things are doubtless: yet in truth  
we've had

Strange thunders from the potency of  
song;

Mingled indeed with what is sweet and  
strong,

From majesty: but in clear truth the  
themes

Are ugly clubs, the Poets Polyphemes  
Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless  
shower

Of light is poesy; 'tis the supreme of  
power;

'Tis might half slumb'ring on its own  
right arm.

The very archings of her eye-lids charm  
A thousand willing agents to obey,

And still she governs with the mildest  
sway:

But strength alone though of the Muses  
born

Is like a fallen angel: trees upturn,  
Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and  
sepulchres

Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs  
And thorns of life; forgetting the great  
end

Of poesy, that it should be a friend  
To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts  
of man.

Yet I rejoice: a myrtle fairer than  
E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter  
weeds

Lifts its sweet head into the air, and feeds  
A silent space with ever sprouting green.

All tenderest birds there find a pleasant  
screen,

Creep through the shade with jaunty  
fluttering,

Nibble the little cupped flowers and sing.  
Then let us clear away the choking  
thorns

From round its gentle stem; let the  
young fawns,

Yeanned in after times, when we are  
flown,

Find a fresh sward beneath it, overgrown  
With simple flowers: let there nothing be

More boisterous than a lover's bended knee ;

Nought more ungentle than the placid look

Of one who leans upon a closed book ;  
Nought more untranquil than the grassy slopes

Between two hills. All hail delightful hopes !

As she was wont, th' imagination  
Into most lovely labyrinths will be gone,  
And they shall be accounted poet kings  
Who simply tell the most heart-easing things.

O may these joys be ripe before I die.

Will not some say that I presumptuously  
Have spoken ? that from hastening disgrace

'Twere better far to hide my foolish face ?

That whining boyhood should with reverence bow

Ere the dread thunderbolt could reach ?  
How !

If I do hide myself, it sure shall be  
In the very fane, the light of Poesy :  
If I do fail, at least I will be laid  
Beneath the silence of a poplar shade ;

And over me the grass shall be smooth shaven ;

And there shall be a kind memorial graven.

But off Despondence ! miserable bane !  
They should not know thee, who athirst to gain

A noble end, are thirsty every hour.  
What though I am not wealthy in the dower

Of spanning wisdom ; though I do not know

The shiftings of the mighty winds that blow

Hither and thither all the changing thoughts

Of man : though no great minist'ring reason sorts

Out the dark mysteries of human souls  
To clear conceiving : yet there ever rolls  
A vast idea before me, and I glean  
Therefrom my liberty ; thence too I've seen

The end and aim of Poesy. 'Tis clear  
As anything most true ; as that the year  
Is made of the four seasons—manifest  
As a large cross, some old cathedral's crest.

Lifted to the white clouds. Therefore should I

Be but the essence of deformity,  
A coward, did my very eye-lids wink .  
At speaking out what I have dared to think.

Ah ! rather let me like a madman run  
Over some precipice ; let the hot sun  
Melt my Dedalian wings, and drive me down

Convuls'd and headlong ! Stay ! an inward frown

Of conscience bids me be more calm awhile.

An ocean dim, sprinkled with many an isle,

Spreads awfully before me. How much toil !

How many days ! what desperate turmoil !

Ere I can have explored its widenesses.  
Ah, what a task ! upon my bended knees,  
I could unsay those—no, impossible !  
Impossible !

For sweet relief I'll dwell  
On humbler thoughts, and let this strange assay

Begun in gentleness die so away.

E'en now all tumult from my bosom fades :

I turn full hearted to the friendly aids  
That smooth the path of honor ; brotherhood,

And friendliness the nurse of mutual good.

The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant sonnet

Into the brain ere one can think upon it ;  
The silence when some rhymes are coming out ;

And when they're come, the very pleasant rout :

The message certain to be done to-morrow.

'Tis perhaps as well that it should be to borrow

Some precious book from out its snug retreat,

To cluster round it when we next shall meet.

Scarce can I scribble on : for lovely airs  
Are fluttering round the room like doves in pairs ;

Many delights of that glad day recalling.  
When first my senses caught their tender falling.

And with these airs come forms of elegance

Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's prance,

Careless, and grand—fingers soft and round  
Parting luxuriant curls;—and the swift bound  
Of Bacchus from his chariot, when his eye  
Made Ariadne's cheek look blushinglly.  
Thus I remember all the pleasant flow  
Of words at opening a portfolio.

Things such as these are ever harbingers  
To trains of peaceful images: the stir  
Of a swan's neck unseen among the rushes:

A linnet starting all about the bushes:  
A butterfly, with golden wings broad parted

Nestling a rose, convuls'd as though it smarted

With over pleasure—many, many more,  
Might I indulge at large in all my store  
Of luxuries: yet I must not forget  
Sleep, quiet, with his poppy coronet:  
For what there may be worthy in these rhymes

I partly owe to him: and thus, the chimes

Of friendly voices had just given place  
To as sweet a silence, when I 'gan retrace  
The pleasant day, upon a couch at ease.  
It was a poet's house<sup>1</sup> who keeps the keys  
Of pleasure's temple. Round about were hung

The glorious features of the bards who sung

In other ages—cold and sacred busts  
Smiled at each other. Happy he who trusts

To clear Futurity his darling fame!  
Then there were fauns and satyrs taking aim

At swelling apples with a frisky leap  
And reaching fingers, 'mid a luscious heap

Of vine leaves. Then there rose to view  
A fane

Of liny marble, and thereto a train  
Of nymphs approaching fairly o'er the sward:

One, loveliest, holding her white hand toward

The dazzling sun-rise: two sisters sweet  
Bending their graceful figures till they meet

Over the trippings of a little child:  
And some are hearing, eagerly, the wild

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's. The following lines are a description of the room in which the poem was written, with its decorations.

Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.  
See, in another picture, nymphs are wiping

Cherishingly Diana's timorous limbs;—  
A fold of lawny mantle dabbling swims  
At the bath's edge, and keeps a gentle motion

With the subsiding crystal: as when ocean

Heaves calmly its broad swelling smoothness o'er

Its rocky marge, and balances once more

The patient weeds; that now unshent by foam

Feel all about their undulating home.

Sappho's meek head was there half smiling down

At nothing; just as though the earnest frown

Of over thinking had that moment gone  
From off her brow, and left her all alone.

Great Alfred's too, with anxious, pitying eyes,

As if he always listened to the sighs  
Of the goaded world; and Kosciusko's worn

By horrid suffrance—mightily forlorn.

Petrarch, outstepping from the shady green,

Starts at the sight of Laura; nor can wean

His eyes from her sweet face. Most happy they!

For over them was seen a free display  
Of out-spread wings, and from between them shone

The face of Poesy: from off her throne  
She overlook'd things that I scarce could tell.

The very sense of where I was might well

Keep Sleep aloof: but more than that there came

Thought after thought to nourish up the flame

Within my breast; so that the morning light

Surprised me even from a sleepless night:  
And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,

Resolving to begin that very day  
These lines; and howsoever they be done,

I leave them as a father does his son.

† 1816. 1817.



AFTER DARK VAPORS HAVE  
OPPRESSED OUR PLAINS

AFTER dark vapors have oppressed our  
plains  
For a long dreary season, comes a day  
Born of the gentle South, and clears  
away  
From the sick heavens all unseemly  
stains. [pains,  
The anxious month, relieved from its  
Takes as a long-lost right the feel of  
May.  
The eyelids with the passing coolness  
play,  
Like rose leaves with the drip of sum-  
mer rains.  
And calmest thoughts come round us—  
as, of leaves  
Budding,—fruit ripening in stillness,—  
autumn suns  
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves,—  
Sweet Sappho's cheek,—a sleeping in-  
fant's breath.—  
The gradual sand that through an hour-  
glass runs.—  
A woodland rivulet, a Poet's death.  
*January, 1817. February 23, 1817.*

TO LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.

[Dedication of the volume of 1817]

GLORY and loveliness have passed away ;  
For if we wander out in early morn,  
No wreathed incense do we see up-  
borne  
Into the east, to meet the smiling day :  
No crowd of nymphs soft voic'd and  
young, and gay,  
In woven baskets bringing ears of  
corn,  
Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn  
The shrine of Flora in her early May.  
But there are left delights as high as  
these,  
And I shall ever bless my destiny,  
That in a time, when under pleasant  
trees  
Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free  
A leafy luxury, seeing I could please  
With these poor offerings, a man like  
thee. *1817. 1817.*

ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES

My spirit is too weak—mortality  
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling  
sleep,

And each imagin'd pinnacle and steep  
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die  
Like a sick Eagle looking at the sky.  
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep  
That I have not the cloudy winds to  
keep,  
Fresh for the opening of the morning's  
eye.  
Such dim-conceiv'd glories of the brain  
Bring round the heart an undescri-  
bable feud ;  
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain.  
That mingles Grecian grandeur with  
the rude  
Wasting of old Time—with a billowy  
main—  
A sun—a shadow of a magnitude.  
*1817. March 9, 1817.*

ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER

COME hither all sweet maidens soberly,  
Down-looking aye, and with a chastened  
light  
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white.  
And meekly let your fair hands joined  
be,  
As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
Untouched, a victim of your beauty  
bright,  
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,  
Sinking bewildered 'mid the dreary sea :  
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death :  
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary  
lips  
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against  
her smile.  
O horrid dream ! see how his body dips  
Dead-heavy ; arms and shoulders gleam  
awhile :  
He's gone ; up bubbles all his amorous  
breath ! *? . . . 1829.*

ON THE SEA

It keeps eternal whisperings around  
Desolate shores, and with its mighty  
swell  
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till  
the spell  
Of Hecate leaves them their old shad-  
ow sound.  
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,  
That scarcely will the very smallest  
shell  
Be moved for days from whence it some-  
time fell,  
When last the winds of heaven were un-  
bound.

Oh ye ! who have your eye-balls vexed  
and tired,  
Feast them upon the wideness of the  
Sea ;  
Oh ye ! whose ears are dinned with  
uproar rude,  
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—  
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and  
brood  
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs  
quired ! *August, 1817. 1848.*

WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I  
MAY CEASE TO BE

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming  
brain,  
Before high pil'd books, in charact'ry,  
Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd  
grain ;  
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd  
face,  
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And think that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of  
chance ;  
And when I feel, fair creature of an  
hour !  
That I shall never look upon thee more,  
Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love !—then on the  
shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and  
think  
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do  
sink. *1817. 1848.*

FROM ENDYMION

BOOK I

PROEM

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever :  
Its loveliness increases ; it will never  
Pass into nothingness ; but still will  
keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and  
quiet breathing.  
Therefore, on every morrow, are we  
wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth.  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman  
dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened  
ways

Made for our searching : yes, in spite of  
all,  
Some shape of beauty moves away the  
pall  
From our dark spirits. Such the sun,  
the moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady  
boon  
For simple sheep ; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in ; and  
clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert  
make  
'Gainst the hot season ; the mid-forest  
brake,  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose  
blooms :  
And such too is the grandeur of the  
dooms  
We have imagined for the mighty dead ;  
All lovely tales that we have heard or  
read :  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences  
For one short hour ; no, even as the trees  
That whisper round a temple become  
soon  
Dear as the temple's self, so does the  
moon,  
The passion poesy, glories infinite,  
Haunt us till they become a cheering  
light  
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,  
That, whether there be shine, or gloom  
o'ercast,  
They always must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness  
that I  
Will trace the story of Endymion.  
The very music of the name has gone  
Into my being, and each pleasant scene  
Is growing fresh before me as the green  
Of our own valleys : so I will begin  
Now while I cannot hear the city's din ;  
Now while the early budders are just  
new,  
And run in mazes of the youngest hue  
About old forests ; while the willow trails  
Its delicate amber ; and the dairy pails  
Bring home increase of milk. And, as  
the year  
Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly  
steer  
My little boat, for many quiet hours.  
With streams that deepen freshly into  
bowers.

Many and many a verse I hope to write,  
 Before the daisies, vermeil rimm'd and  
   white,  
 Hide in deep herbage; and ere yet the  
   bees  
 Hum about globes of clover and sweet  
   peas,  
 I must be near the middle of my story.  
 O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,  
 See it half finished: but let Autumn  
   bold,  
 With universal tinge of sober gold,  
 Be all about me when I make an end.  
 And now at once, adventuresome, I send  
 My herald thought into a wilderness:  
 There let its trumpet blow, and quickly  
   dress  
 My uncertain path with green, that I  
   may speed  
 Easily onward, thorough flowers and  
   weed.

## HYMN TO PAN

O THOU, whose mighty palace roof  
   doth hang  
 From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
 Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life,  
   death  
 Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;  
 Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress  
 Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels  
   darken;  
 And through whole solemn hours dost  
   sit, and hearken  
 The dreary melody of bedded reeds—  
 In desolate places, where dank moisture  
   breeds  
 The pipy hemlock to strange over-  
   growth;  
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth  
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou  
   now,  
 By thy love's milky brow!  
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,  
 Hear us, great Pan!

O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet,  
   turtles  
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong  
   myrtles,  
 What time thou wanderest at eventide  
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt  
   the side  
 Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to  
   whom  
 Broad leaved fig trees even now fore-  
   doom  
 Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow girted  
   bees

Their golden honeycombs; our village  
   leas  
 Their fairest-blossom'd beans and pop-  
   pied corn;  
 The chuckling linnet its five young un-  
   born,  
 To sing for thee; low creeping straw-  
   berries  
 Their summer coolness; pent up butter-  
   flies  
 Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh  
   budding year  
 All its completions—be quickly near,  
 By every wind that nods the mountain  
   pine,  
 O forester divine!

Thou, to whom every fawn and satyr  
   flies  
 For willing service; whether to surprise  
 The squatted hare while in half sleeping  
   fit;  
 Or upward ragged precipices flit  
 To save poor lambkins from the eagle's  
   maw;  
 Or by mysterious enticement draw  
 Bewildered shepherds to their path  
   again;  
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy  
   main,  
 And gather up all fancifullest shells  
 For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,  
 And, being hidden, laugh at their out-  
   peeping;  
 Or to delight thee with fantastic leap-  
   ing,  
 The while they pelt each other on the  
   crown  
 With silvery oak apples, and fir cones  
   brown—  
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,  
 Hear us, O satyr king!

O Harkener to the loud clapping  
   shears,  
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
 A ram goes bleating: Winder of the  
   horn,  
 When snouted wild-boars routing tender  
   corn  
 Anger our huntsman: Breather round  
   our farms.  
 To keep off mildews, and all weather  
   harms:  
 Strange ministrant of undescribed  
   sounds,  
 That come a swooning over hollow  
   grounds,  
 And wither drearily on barren moors:

Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
 Leading to universal knowledge—see,  
 Great son of Dryope,  
 The many that are come to pay their  
     vows  
 With leaves about their brows !

Be still the unimaginable lodge  
 For solitary thinkings ; such as dodge  
 Conception to the very bourne of  
     heaven.  
 Then leave the naked brain : be still  
     the heaven.  
 That spreading in this dull and clodded  
     earth  
 Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth :  
 Be still a symbol of immensity ;  
 A firmament reflected in a sea ;  
 An element filling the space between ;  
 An unknown—but no more : we humbly  
     screen  
 With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly  
     bending,  
 And giving out a shout most heaven-  
     rending.  
 Conjure thee to receive our humble  
     Pæan,  
 Upon thy Mount Lycean !

#### THE COMING OF DIAN

[*Endymion speaks, to his Sister Peona.*]

“ This river does not see the naked sky,  
 Till it begins to progress silverly  
 Around the western border of the wood,  
 Whence, from a certain spot, its winding  
     flood  
 Seems at the distance like a crescent  
     moon ;  
 And in that nook, the very pride of June,  
 Had I been used to pass my weary eves ;  
 There rather for the sun unwilling leaves  
 So dear a picture of his sovereign power.  
 And I could witness his most kingly hour,  
 When he doth lighten up the golden  
     reins,  
 And paces leisurely down amber plains  
 Hissnorting four. Now when his chariot  
     last  
 Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,  
 There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed  
 Of sacred ditamy, and poppies red :  
 At which I wondered greatly, knowing  
     well  
 That but one night had wrought this  
     flowery spell ;  
 And, sitting down close by, began to  
     muse

What it might mean. Perhaps, thought  
     I, Morpheus,  
 In passing here, his owlet pinions shook ;  
 Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook  
 Herebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,  
 Had dipt his rod in it : such garland  
     wealth  
 Came not by common growth. Thus on  
     I thought,  
 Until my head was dizzy and distraught.  
 Moreover, through the dancing poppies  
     stole  
 A breeze, most softly lulling to my soul ;  
 And shaping visions all about my sight  
 Of colors, wings, and bursts of spangly  
     light ;  
 The which became more strange, and  
     strange, and dim,  
 And then were gulf'd in a tumultuous  
     swim :  
 And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell  
 The enchantment that afterwards befell ?  
 Yet it was but a dream : yet such a dream  
 That never tongue, although it overteem  
 With mellow utterance, like a cavern  
     spring,  
 Could figure out and to conception bring  
 All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay  
 Watching the zenith, where the milky  
     way  
 Among the stars in virgin splendor  
     pours ;  
 And travelling my eye, until the doors  
 Of heaven appeared to open for my flight,  
 I became loth and fearful to alight  
 From such high soaring by a downward  
     glance :  
 So kept me steadfast in that airy trance,  
 Spreading imaginary pinions wide.  
 When, presently, the stars began to glide,  
 And faint away, before my eager view :  
 At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,  
 And dropped my vision to the horizon's  
     verge :  
 And lo ! from opening clouds, I saw  
 The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er  
 A shell for Neptune's goblet : she did  
     soar  
 So passionately bright, my dazzled soul  
 Commingling with her argent spheres  
     did roll  
 Through clear and cloudy, even when  
     she went  
 At last into a dark and vapory tent—  
 Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed  
     train  
 Of planets all were in the blue again.  
 To commune with those orbs, once more  
     I rais'd

My sight right upward : but it was quite  
dazed  
By a bright something, sailing down  
apace,  
Making me quickly veil my eyes and  
face :  
Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,  
Who from Olympus watch our destinies !  
Whence that completed form of all com-  
pleteness ?  
Whence came that high perfection of all  
sweetness ?  
Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me  
where, O where  
Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair ?  
Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western  
sun ; [shun  
Not—thy soft hand, fair sister ! let me  
Such follying before thee—yet she had,  
Indeed, locks bright enough to make me  
mad ;  
And they were simply gordian'd up and  
braided,  
Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,  
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and  
orb'd brow :  
The which were blended in, I know not  
how,  
With such a paradise of lips and eyes.  
Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and  
faintest sighs,  
That, when I think thereon, my spirit  
clings  
And plays about its fancy, till the stings  
Of human neighborhood envenom all.  
Unto what awful power shall I call ?  
To what high fane ?—Ah ! see her hover-  
ing feet,  
More blue-ly vein'd, more soft, more  
whitely sweet  
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she  
rose  
From out her cradle shell. The wind  
out-blows  
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion ;  
'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a mil-  
lion  
Of little eyes, as though thou wert to  
shed,  
Over the darkest, lushest blue-bell bed,  
Handfuls of daisies."—"Endymion, how  
strange !  
Dream within dream !"—"She took an  
airy range,  
And then, towards me, like a very maid,  
Came blushing, waning, willing, and  
afraid,  
And press'd me by the hand : Ah ! 'twas  
too much ;

Methought I fainted at the charmed  
touch,  
Yet held my recollection, even as one  
Who dives three fathoms where the  
waters run  
Gurgling in beds of coral : for anon,  
I felt upmounted in that region  
Where falling stars dart their artillery  
forth,  
And eagles struggle with the buffeting  
north  
That balances the heavy meteor-stone ;—  
Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone.  
But lapp'd and lull'd along the danger-  
ous sky.  
Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journey-  
ing high,  
And straightway into frightful eddies  
swoop'd :  
Such as aye muster where gray time has  
scoop'd  
Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's  
side :  
Their hollow sounds arous'd me, and I  
sigh'd  
To faint once more by looking on my  
bliss—  
I was distracted ; madly did I kiss  
The wooing arms which held me, and  
did give  
My eyes at once to death : but 'twas to  
live,  
To take in draughts of life from the gold  
fount  
Of kind and passionate looks ; to count,  
and count  
The moments, by some greedy help that  
seem'd [deem'd  
A second self, that each might be re-  
And plunder'd of its load of blessedness.  
Ah, desperate mortal ! I ev'n dar'd to  
press  
Her very cheek against my crowned lip.  
And, at that moment, felt my body dip  
Into a warmer air : a moment more,  
Our feet were soft in flowers. There  
was store  
Of newest joys upon that alp. Some-  
times  
A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,  
Loiter'd around us ; then of honey cells,  
Made delicate from all white-flower  
bells ;  
And once, above the edges of our nest,  
An arch face peep'd,—an Oread as I  
guess'd.  
"Why did I dream that sleep o'er-  
power'd me

In midst of all this heaven? Why not  
 see,  
 Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,  
 And stare them from me? But no, like  
 a spark  
 That needs must die, although its little  
 beam  
 Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream  
 Fell into nothing—into stupid sleep.  
 And so it was, until a gentle creep,  
 A careful moving caught my waking  
 ears,  
 And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my  
 tears,  
 My clenched hands;—for lo! the poppies  
 hung [sung  
 Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel  
 A heavy ditty, and the sullen day  
 Had chidden herald Hesperus away,  
 With leaden looks: the solitary breeze  
 Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did  
 tease  
 With wayward melancholy; and I  
 thought,  
 Mark me, Peona! that sometimes it  
 brought,  
 Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled  
 adieus!—  
 Away I wander'd—all the pleasant hues  
 Of heaven and earth had faded: deepest  
 shades  
 Were deepest dungeons; heaths and  
 sunny glades  
 Were full of pestilent light; our taintless  
 rills  
 Seem'd sooty, and o'er-spread with up-  
 turn'd gills  
 Of dying fish; the vermeil rose had blown  
 In frightful scarlet, and its thorns out-  
 grown  
 Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird  
 Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and  
 stirr'd  
 If little journeys, I beheld in it  
 A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit  
 My soul with under darkness; to entice  
 My stumblings down some monstrous  
 precipice:  
 Therefore I eager followed, and did curse  
 The disappointment. Time, that aged  
 nurse,  
 Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank  
 gentle heaven!  
 These things, with all their comfortings,  
 are given  
 To my down-sunken hours, and with  
 thee,  
 Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea  
 Of weary life."

## FROM BOOK II

## INVOCATION TO THE POWER OF LOVE

O SOVEREIGN power of love! O grief!  
 O balm!  
 All records, saving thine, come cool, and  
 calm,  
 And shadowy, through the mist of  
 passed years:  
 For others, good or bad, hatred and tears  
 Have become indolent; but touching  
 thine,  
 One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth  
 pine,  
 One kiss brings honey-dew from buried  
 days.  
 The woes of Troy, towers smothering  
 o'er their blaze,  
 Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears,  
 keen blades,  
 Struggling, and blood, and shrieks—all  
 dimly fades  
 Into some backward corner of the brain;  
 Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain  
 The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.  
 Hence, pageant history! hence, gilded  
 cheat!  
 Swart planet in the universe of deeds!  
 Wide sea, that one continuous murmur  
 breeds  
 Along the pebbled shore of memory!  
 Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be  
 Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnified  
 To goodly vessels: many a sail of pride,  
 And golden keel'd, is left unlaunch'd  
 and dry.  
 But wherefore this? What care, though  
 owl did fly  
 About the great Athenian admiral's  
 mast?  
 What care, though striding Alexander  
 past  
 The Indus with his Macedonian numbers?  
 Though old Ulysses tortured from his  
 slumbers  
 The glutton Cyclops, what care?—Juliet  
 leaning  
 Amid her window-flowers,—sighing,—  
 weaning  
 Tenderly her fancy from its maiden  
 snow, [flow  
 Doth more avail than these: the silver  
 Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,  
 Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,  
 Are things to brood on with more ardency  
 Than the death-day of empires. Fearfully  
 Must such conviction come upon his  
 head,

Who, thus far, discontent, has dared to tread,  
Without one muse's smile, or kind be-  
hest,  
The path of love and poesy. But rest,  
In chafing restlessness, is yet more  
drear  
Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear  
Love's standard on the battlements of  
song.  
So once more days and nights aid me  
along,  
Like legion'd soldiers.

## FROM BOOK IV

## ROUNDELAY

"O Sorrow,  
Why dost borrow  
The natural hue of health, from vermeil  
lips?  
To give maiden blushes  
To the white rose bushes?  
Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

"O Sorrow,  
Why dost borrow  
The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—  
To give the glow-worm light?  
Or, on a moonless night,  
To tinge, on siren shores, the salt sea-  
spray?

"O Sorrow,  
Why dost borrow  
The mellow ditties from a mourning  
tongue?—  
To give at evening pale  
Unto the nightingale,  
That thou mayst listen the cold dews  
among?

"O Sorrow,  
Why dost borrow  
Heart's lightness from the merriment of  
May?—  
A lover would not tread  
A cowslip on the head,  
Though he should dance from eve till  
peep of day—  
Nor any drooping flower  
Held sacred for thy bower,  
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

"To Sorrow,  
I bade good-morrow,  
And thought to leave her far away be-  
hind;

But cheerly, cheerly,  
She loves me dearly;  
She is so constant to me, and so kind:  
I would deceive her  
And so leave her,  
But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river  
side,  
I sat a-weeping: in the whole world wide  
There was no one to ask me why I wept,—  
And so I kept  
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears  
Cold as my fears.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river  
side,  
I sat a-weeping: what enamored bride.  
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the  
clouds,  
But hides and shrouds  
Beneath dark palm trees by a riverside?

"And as I sat, over the light blue hills  
There came a noise of revellers: the rills  
Into the wide stream came of purple  
hue—

'Twas Bacchus and his crew!  
The earnest trumpet spake, and silver  
thrills  
From kissing cymbals made a merry  
din—

'Twas Bacchus and his kin!  
Like to a moving vintage down they  
came,  
Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all  
on flame:  
All madly dancing through the pleasant-  
valley.

To scare thee, Melancholy!  
O then, O then, thou wast a simple  
name!

And I forgot thee, as the berried holly  
By shepherds, is forgotten, when, in  
June,

Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and  
moon:—  
I rush'd into the folly!

"Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus  
stood.

Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,  
With sidelong laughing:  
And little rills of crimson wine imbrued  
His plump white arms, and shoulders  
enough white

For Venus' pearly bite;  
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,  
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
Tipsily quaffing.

" Whence came ye, merry Damsels !  
 whence came ye !  
 So many, and so many, and such glee ?  
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate,  
 Your lutes, and gentler fate ?—  
 ' We follow Bacchus ! Bacchus on the  
 wing,  
 A conquering !  
 Bacchus, young Bacchus ! good or ill be-  
 tide,  
 We dance before him thorough kingdoms  
 wide :—  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
 To our wild minstrelsy !'

" Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs ! whence  
 came ye !  
 So many, and so many, and such glee ?  
 Why have ye left your forest haunts,  
 why left  
 Your nuts in oak-tree cleft ?—  
 ' For wine, for wine we left our kernel  
 tree ;  
 For wine we left our heath, and yellow  
 brooms,  
 And cold mushrooms ;  
 For wine we follow Bacchus through the  
 earth ;  
 Great God of breathless cups and chirp-  
 ing mirth !—  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
 To our mad minstrelsy !'

" Over widestreams and mountains great  
 we went, [tent,  
 And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy  
 Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,  
 With Asian elephants :  
 Onward these myriads—with song and  
 dance,  
 With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians'  
 prance,  
 Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,  
 Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,  
 Plump infant laughs mimicking the  
 coil  
 Of seamen, and stout galley-rower's toil :  
 With toying oars and silken sails they  
 glide,  
 Nor care for wind and tide.

" Mounted on panthers' furs and lions'  
 manes, [plains ;  
 From rear to van they scour about the  
 A three days' journey in a moment done :  
 And always, at the rising of the sun,  
 About the wilds they hunt with spear  
 and horn,  
 On spleenful unicorn.

" I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown  
 Before the vine-wreath crown !  
 I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing  
 To the silver cymbals' ring !  
 I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
 Old Tartary the fierce !  
 The kings of Inde their jewel-sceptres  
 vail,  
 And from their treasures scatter pearled  
 hail ;  
 Great Brahma from his mystic heaven  
 groans,  
 And all his priesthood moans,  
 Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning  
 pale.—  
 Into these regions came I following  
 him,  
 Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim  
 To stray away into these forests drear  
 Alone, without a peer :  
 And I have told thee all thou mayest  
 hear.

" Young stranger !  
 I've been a ranger  
 In search of pleasure throughout every  
 clime :  
 Alas ! 'tis not for me !  
 Bewitch'd I sure must be,  
 To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

" Come then. Sorrow !  
 Sweetest Sorrow !  
 Like an own babe I nurse thee on my  
 breast :  
 I thought to leave thee  
 And deceive thee,  
 But now of all the world I love thee best.

" There is not one,  
 No, no, not one  
 But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid ;  
 Thou art her mother,  
 And her brother,  
 Her playmate, and her wooer in the  
 shade."

#### THE FEAST OF DIAN

WHO, who from Dian's feast would be  
 away ?  
 For all the golden bowers of the day  
 Are empty left ? Who, who away would  
 be  
 From Cynthia's wedding and festivity ?  
 Not Hesperus : lo ! upon his silver  
 wings  
 He leans away for highest heaven and  
 sings,



Snapping his lucid fingers merrily !—  
Ah, Zephyrus ! art here, and Flora too !  
Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,  
Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,

Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill  
Your baskets high  
With fennel green, and balm, and golden pines,

Savory, latter-mint, and columbines,  
Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny thyme ;

Yea, every flower and leaf of every clime,

All gather'd in the dewy morning : hie  
Away ! fly, fly !—

Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,  
Aquarius ! to whom king Jove has given  
Two liquid pulse streams 'stead of feather'd wings,

Two fan-like fountains,—thine illuminings

For Dian play :  
Dissolve the frozen purity of air ;  
Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare

Shew cold through watery pinions ;  
make more bright

The Star-Queen's crescent on her marriage night :

Haste, haste away !—  
Castor has tamed the planet Lion, see !  
And of the Bear has Pollux mastery :  
A third is in the race ! who is the third,

Speeding away swift as the eagle bird ?

The tramping Centaur !  
The Lion's mane's on end : the Bear  
how fierce !

The Centaur's arrow ready seems to pierce

Some enemy : far forth his bow is bent  
Into the blue of heaven. He'll besent,

Pale unrelentor,  
When he shall hear the wedding lutes a-playing.—

Andromeda ! sweet woman ! why delaying

Sotimidly among the stars : come hither !  
Join this bright throng, and nimbly follow whither

They all are going.  
Danaë's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,  
Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud.

Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral :  
Ye shall for ever live and love, for all

Thy tears are flowing.

1817. 1818.

## ROBIN HOOD

No ! those days are gone away,  
And their hours are old and gray,  
And their minutes buried all  
Under the down-trodden pall  
Of the leaves of many years :  
Many times have winter's shears,  
Frozen North, and chilling East,  
Sounded tempests to the feast  
Of the forest's whispering fierces.  
Since men knew nor rent nor leases

No, the bugle sounds no more,  
And the twanging bow no more ;  
Silent is the ivory shrill  
Past the heath and up the hill ;  
There is no mid-forest laugh,  
Where lone Echo gives the half  
To some wight, amaz'd to hear  
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June  
You may go, with sun or moon,  
Or the seven stars to light you,  
Or the polar ray to right you ;  
But you never may behold  
Little John, or Robin bold ;  
Never one, of all the clan,  
Thrumming on an empty can  
Some old hunting ditty, while  
He doth his green way beguile  
To fair hostess Merriment,  
Down beside the pasture Trent ;  
For he left the merry tale  
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din ;  
Gone, the song of Gamelyn :  
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
Idling in the "grené shawe ;"  
All are gone away and past !  
And if Robin should be cast  
Sudden from his turfed grave,  
And if Marian should have  
Once again her forest days,  
She would weep, and he would craz  
He would swear, for all his oaks,  
Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes  
Have rotted on the briny seas ;  
She would weep that her wild bees  
Sang not to her—strange ! that hom  
Can't be got without hard money !

So it is : yet let us sing,  
Honor to the old bow-string !  
Honor to the bugle-horn !  
Honor to the woods unshorn !  
Honor to the Lincoln green !

Honor to the archer keen!  
Honor to tight Little John,  
And the horse he rode upon!  
Honor to bold Robin Hood,  
Sleeping in the underwood!  
Honor to Maid Marian,  
And to all the Sherwood-clan!  
Though their days have hurried by,  
Let us two a burden try.

February 3, 1818. 1820.

#### IN A DREAR-NIGHTED DECEMBER

IN a drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy tree,  
Thy branches ne'er remember  
Their green felicity:  
The north cannot undo them,  
With a sleety whistle through them;  
Nor frozen thawings glue them  
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy brook,  
Thy bubblings ne'er remember  
Apollo's summer look;  
But with a sweet forgetting,  
They stay their crystal fretting,  
Never, never petting  
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many  
A gentle girl and boy!  
But were there ever any  
Writhed not at passèd joy?  
To know the change and feel it,  
When there is none to heal it,  
Nor numbèd sense to steal it,  
Was never said in rhyme.

? . . 1829.

#### TO AILSA ROCK

HEARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid!  
Give answer from thy voice, the sea-  
fowls' screams!  
When were thy shoulders mantled in  
huge streams?  
When, from the sun, was thy broad fore-  
head hid?  
How long is't since the mighty power bid  
Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom  
dreams?  
Sleep in the lap of thunder or sun-  
beams.  
Or when gray clouds are thy cold cover-  
lid.  
Thou answer'st not; for thou art dead  
asleep;

Thy life is but two dead eternities—  
The last in air, the former in the deep,  
First with the whales, last with the  
eagle-skies—  
Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake  
made thee steep.

Another cannot wake thy giant size.

July, 1818. 1819.

#### THE HUMAN SEASONS

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the  
year:

There are four seasons in the mind of  
man:

He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear  
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:  
He has his Summer, when luxuriously  
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought  
he loves

To ruminate, and by such dreaming high  
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves  
His soul has in its Autumn, when his  
wings

He furleth close; contented so to look  
On mists in idleness—to let fair things  
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.  
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,  
Or else he would forego his mortal na-  
ture.

? . . 1819.

#### TO HOMER

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,  
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,  
As one who sits ashore and longs per-  
chance

To visit Dolphin-coral in deep seas.  
So thou wast blind;—but then the veil  
was rent,

For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let thee  
live.

And Neptune made for thee a spumy  
tent.

And Pan made sing for thee his forest-  
hive.

Aye, on the shores of darkness there is  
light,

And precipices show untrodden green,  
There is a budding morrow in mid-  
night.<sup>1</sup>

There is a triple sight in blindness keen;  
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once  
befell

To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven,  
and Hell.

1818. 1848.

<sup>1</sup> Forman records in his notes that Rossetti considered this to be "Keats' finest single line of poetry." (Keats' Works, II., 238.)

LINES  
ON  
THE MERMAID TAVERN

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison? O generous food!  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood  
Would, with his maid Marian,  
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quill  
To a sheepskin gave the story,  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new old sign  
Sipping beverage divine,  
And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

1818. 1820.

FANCY

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home:  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;  
Then let winged Fancy wander  
Through the thought still spread beyond  
her:  
Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.  
O sweet Fancy! let her loose:  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming;  
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,  
Cloys with tasting: What do then?  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear fagot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night:  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon:

When the Night doth meet the Noon  
In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.  
Sit thee there, and send abroad,  
With a mind self-overaw'd  
Fancy, high-commission'd:—send her!  
She has vassals to attend her:  
She will bring, in spite of frost,  
Beauties that the earth hath lost;  
She will bring thee, all together.  
All delights of summer weather;  
All the buds and bells of May,  
From dewy sward or thorny spray:  
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,  
With a still, mysterious stealth:  
She will mix these pleasures up  
Like three fit wines in a cup,  
And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt  
hear

Distant harvest-carols clear;  
Rustle of the reaped corn;  
Sweet birds antheiming the morn:  
And, in the same moment—hark!  
'Tis the early April lark,  
Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
Foraging for sticks and straw.  
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
The daisy and the marigold;  
White-plum'd lilies, and the first  
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst:  
Shaded hyacinth, alway  
Sapphire queen of the mid-May:  
And every leaf, and every flower  
Pearled with the self-same shower.  
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
Meagre from its celled sleep;  
And the snake all winter-thin  
Cast on sunny bank its skin:  
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see  
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,  
When the henbird's wing doth rest  
Quiet on her mossy nest;  
Then the hurry and alarm  
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;  
Acorns ripe down-pattering,  
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
Every thing is spoilt by use:  
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
Too much gaz'd at? Where's the ma<sup>n</sup>  
Whose lip mature is ever new?  
Where's the eye, however blue,  
Doth not weary? Where's the face  
One would meet in every place?  
Where's the voice, however soft,  
One would hear so very oft?  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.

en, winged Fancy find  
 mistress to thy mind :  
 -eyed as Ceres' daughter,  
 e God of Torment taught her  
 o frown and how to chide ;  
 i waist and with a side  
 as Hebe's, when her zone  
 d its golden clasp, and down  
 r kirtle to her feet,  
 she held the goblet sweet,  
 love grew languid.—Break the  
 mesh  
 Fancy's silken leash ;  
 y break her prison-string  
 ich joys as these she'll bring.—  
 e winged Fancy roam,  
 re never is at home. 1818. 1820.

## ISABELLA

OR

## THE POT OF BASIL

## A STORY FROM BOCCACCIO

sabel, poor simple Isabel !  
 nzo, a young palmer in Love's  
 eye !  
 ould not in the self-same mansion  
 lwell  
 out some stir of heart, some  
 malady ;  
 ould not sit at meals but feel how  
 well  
 othéd each to be the other by ;  
 ould not, sure, beneath the same  
 roof sleep  
 each other dream, and nightly  
 weep.

every morn their love grew ten-  
 derer,  
 every eve deeper and tenderer  
 still ;  
 ght not in house, field, or garden  
 stir,  
 her full shape would all his seeing  
 fill ;  
 is continual voice was pleasanter  
 er, than noise of trees or hidden  
 rill ;  
 te-string gave an echo of his name,  
 oilt her half-done broiery with  
 the same.

ew whose gentle hand was at the  
 latch,  
 ore the door had given her to his  
 eyes ;

And from her chamber-window he  
 would catch  
 Her beauty farther than the falcon  
 spies :  
 And constant as her vespers would he  
 watch,  
 Because her face was turn'd to the  
 same skies ;  
 And with sick longing all the night out-  
 wear,  
 To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

A whole long month of May in this sad  
 plight  
 Made their cheeks paler by the break  
 of June :  
 "To-morrow will I bow to my delight,  
 To-morrow will I ask my lady's  
 boon."—  
 "O may I never see another night,  
 Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not  
 love's tune."—  
 So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,  
 Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;

Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek  
 Fell sick within the rose's just domain,  
 Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth  
 seek  
 By every lull to cool her infant's pain :  
 "How ill she is," said he, "I may not  
 speak,  
 And yet I will, and tell my love all  
 plain :  
 If looks speak love-laws, I will drink  
 her tears,  
 And at the least 'twill startle off her  
 cares."

So said he one fair morning, and all day  
 His heart beat awfully against his  
 side ;  
 And to his heart he inwardly did pray  
 For power to speak ; but still the ruddy  
 tide  
 Stifled his voice, and puls'd resolve  
 away—  
 Fever'd his high conceit of such a  
 bride.  
 Yet brought him to the meekness of a  
 child :  
 Alas ! when passion is both meek and  
 wild !

So once more he had wak'd and an-  
 guished  
 A dreary night of love and misery,  
 If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed  
 To every symbol on his forehead high ;

She saw it waxing very pale and dead,  
And straight all flush'd; so, lisped  
tenderly,

"Lorenzo!"—here she ceas'd her timid  
quest,

But in her tone and look he read the rest.

"O Isabella, I can half perceive  
That I may speak my grief into thine  
ear;

If thou didst ever anything believe,  
Believe how I love thee, believe how  
near

My soul is to its doom: I would not  
grieve

Thy hand by unwelcome pressing,  
would not fear

Thine eyes by gazing; but I cannot  
live

Another night, and not my passion  
shrive.

"Love! thou art leading me from wintry  
cold.

Lady! thou ledest me to summer  
clime,

And I must taste the blossoms that  
unfold

In its ripe warmth this gracious  
morning time."

So said, his erewhile timid lips grew  
bold,

And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme:  
Great bliss was with them, and great  
happiness

Grew, like a lusty flower in June's  
caress.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the  
air,

Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
Only to meet again more close, and share  
The inward fragrance of each other's  
heart.

She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
Sang, of delicious love and honey'd  
dart;

He with light steps went up a western  
hill,

And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd  
his fill.

All close they met again, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant  
veil,

All close they met, all eves, before the  
dusk

Had taken from the stars its pleasant  
veil,

Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
Unknown of any, free from whisper-  
ing tale.

Ah! better had it been for ever so,  
Than idle ears should pleasure in their  
woe.

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot  
be—

Too many tears for lovers have been  
shed,

Too many sighs give we to them in fee.  
Too much of pity after they are dead,  
Too many doleful stories do we see,

Whose matter in bright gold were best  
be read;

Except in such a page where Theseus'  
spouse

Over the pathless waves towards him  
bows.

But, for the general award of love,  
The little sweet doth kill much bitter-  
ness;

Though Dido silent is in under-grove,  
And Isabella's was a great distress,  
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian  
clove

Was not embalm'd, this truth is not  
the less—

Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-  
bowers.

Know there is richest juice in poison-  
flowers.

With her two brothers this fair lady  
dwelt.

Enriched from ancestral merchandise.  
And for them many a weary hand did  
swelt

In torched mines and noisy factories.  
And many once proud-quiver'd loins did  
melt

In blood from stinging whip;—with  
hollow eyes

Many all day in dazzling river stood,  
To take the rich-ored driftings of the  
flood.

For them the Ceylon diver held his  
breath,

And went all naked to the hungry  
shark;

For them his ears gush'd blood; for  
them in death

The seal on the cold ice with piteous  
bark

Lay full of darts; for them alone did  
seethe

A thousand men in troubles wide and dark :  
Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,  
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

Why were they proud? Because their marble founts  
Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's tears?—

Why were they proud? Because fair orange-mounts  
Were of more soft ascent than lazarus stairs?—

Why were they proud? Because red-lin'd accounts  
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?—

Why were they proud? again we ask aloud,

Why in the name of Glory were they proud?

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired

In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,  
As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,

Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-spies;

The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired

And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies—

Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away,—

Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

How was it these same ledger-men could spy

Fair Isabella in her downy nest?

How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye

A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's pest

Into their vision covetous and sly!

How could these money-bags see east and west?—

Yet so they did—and every dealer fair  
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!

Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,

And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,

And of thy roses amorous of the moon,

And of thy lilies, that do paler grow

Now they can no more hear thy ghitt-tern's tune,

For venturing syllables that ill beseem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale

Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;

There is no other crime, no mad assail

To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:

But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—

To honor thee, and thy gone spirit greet;

To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,

An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

These brethren having found by many signs

What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she lov'd him too, each uncon-fines

His bitter thoughts to other, well-nigh mad

That he, the servant of their trade de-signs,

Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad

When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees

To some high noble and his olive-trees.

And many a jealous conference had they,

And many times they bit their lips alone,

Before they fix'd upon a surest way

To make the youngster for his crime atone;

And at the last, these men of cruel clay

Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the bone:

For they resolv'd in some forest dim

To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant

Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade

Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent

Their footing through the dew; and to him said,

"You seem there in the quiet of content,

Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade

Calm speculation; but if you are wise,

Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

"To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we mount  
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine ;  
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count

His dewy rosary on the eglantine."  
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents' whine ;  
And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,  
Each third step did he pause, and listen'd oft

If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
Or the light whisper of her footstep soft ;

And as he thus over his passion hung,  
He heard a laugh full musical aloft ;  
When, looking up, he saw her features bright  
Smile through an in-door lattice, all delight.

"Love, Isabel!" said he, "I was in pain  
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow :

Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so fain

I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow  
Of a poor three hours' absence? but we'll gain

Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.

Good bye! I'll soon be back."—"Good bye!" said she:—

And as he went she chanted merrily.

So the two brothers and their murder'd man

Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream

Gurges through straiten'd banks, and still doth fan

Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream

Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan

The brothers' faces in the ford did seem.

Lorenzo's flush with love.—They pass'd the water

Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love cease ;

Ah! when a soul doth thus its freedom win.

It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace  
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such sin :

They dipp'd their swords in the water, and did tease

Their horses homeward, with convulsed spur,

Each richer by his being a murderer.

They told their sister how, with sudden speed,

Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,

Because of some great urgency and need  
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.

Poor Girl! put on thy stifling widow's weed,

And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed bands ;

To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,

And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be ;  
Sorely she wept until the night came on,

And then, instead of love, O misery !  
She brooded o'er the luxury alone :

His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,  
And to the silence made a gentle moan,

Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
And on her couch low murmuring,

"Where? O where?"

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long

Its fiery vigil in her single breast ;  
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung

Upon the time with feverish unrest—  
Not long—for soon into her heart a throng

Of higher occupants, a richer zest,  
Came tragic : passion not to be subdued,

And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eyes  
The breath of Winter comes from far away,

And the sick west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay

Of death among the bushes and the leaves

To make all bare before he cares to stray

From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel

By gradual decay from beauty fell,

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
 She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all  
 pale,  
 Striving to be itself, what dungeon  
 climes  
 Could keep him off so long? They  
 spake a tale,  
 Time after time, to quiet her. Their  
 crimes  
 Came on them, like a smoke from  
 Hinnom's vale;  
 And every night in dreams they groan'd  
 aloud,  
 To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,  
 But for a thing more deadly dark than  
 all;  
 It came like a fierce potion, drunk by  
 chance,  
 Which saves a sick man from the  
 feather'd pall  
 For some few gasping moments; like a  
 lance,  
 Waking an Indian from his cloudy  
 hall  
 With cruel pierce, and bringing him  
 again  
 Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and  
 brain.

It was a vision.—In the drowsy gloom,  
 The dull of midnight, at her couch's  
 foot  
 Lorenzo stood, and wept: the forest  
 tomb  
 Had marr'd his glossy hair which once  
 could shoot  
 Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom  
 Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute  
 From his lorn voice, and past his loamed  
 ears  
 Had made a miry channel for his tears.

Strange sound it was, when the pale  
 shadow spake;  
 For there was striving, in its piteous  
 tongue,  
 To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
 And Isabella on its music hung:  
 Languor there was in it, and tremulous  
 shake,  
 As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung;  
 And through it moan'd a ghostly under-  
 song,  
 Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars  
 among.

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy  
 bright

With love, and kept all phantom fear  
 aloof  
 From the poor girl by magic of their  
 light,  
 The while it did unthread the horrid  
 woof  
 Of the late darken'd time,—the murder-  
 ous spite  
 Of pride and avarice, the dark pine  
 roof  
 In the forest,—and the sodden turfed  
 dell,  
 Where, without any word, from stabs  
 he fell.

Saying moreover, "Isabel, my sweet!  
 Red whortle-berries droop above my  
 head,  
 And a large flint-stone weighs upon my  
 feet;  
 Around me beeches and high chest-  
 nuts shed  
 Their leaves and prickly nuts; a sheep-  
 fold bleat  
 Comes from beyond the river to my  
 bed:  
 Go, shed one tear upon my heather-  
 bloom,  
 And it shall comfort me within the  
 tomb.

"I am a shadow now, alas! alas!  
 Upon the skirts of human-nature  
 dwelling  
 Alone: I chant alone the holy mass,  
 While little sounds of life are round  
 me knelling,  
 And glossy bees at noon do fieldward  
 pass,  
 And many a chapel bell the hour is  
 telling,  
 Paining me through: those sounds  
 grow strange to me,  
 And thou art distant in Humanity.

"I know what was, I feel full well what  
 is,  
 And I should rage, if spirits could go  
 mad;  
 Though I forget the taste of earthly  
 bliss,  
 That paleness warms my grave, as  
 though I had  
 A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss  
 To be my spouse: thy paleness makes  
 me glad;  
 Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel  
 A greater love through all my essence  
 steal."



The Spirit mourn'd "Adieu!"—dis-  
solv'd, and left

The atom darkness in a slow turmoil;  
As when of healthful midnight sleep  
bereft,

Thinking on rugged hours and fruit-  
less toil,

We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,  
And see the spangly gloom froth up  
and boil:

It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,  
And in the dawn she started up awake;

"Ha! ha!" said she, "I knew not this  
hard life,

I thought the worst was simple  
misery;

I thought some Fate with pleasure or  
with strife

Portion'd us—happy days, or else to  
die;

But there is crime—a brother's bloody  
knife!

Sweet Spirit, thou hast school'd my  
infancy:

I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine  
eyes,

And greet thee morn and even in the  
skies."

When the full morning came, she had  
devised

How she might secret to the forest hie;  
How she might find the clay, so dearly  
prized,

And sing to it one latest lullaby;  
How her short absence might be un-  
surmised,

While she the inmost of the dream  
would try.

Resolv'd, she took with her an aged nurse,  
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

See, as they creep along the riverside,  
How she doth whisper to that aged  
Dame,

And, after looking round the champaign  
wide,

Shows her a knife.—"What feverous  
hectic flame

Burns in thee, child?—What good can  
thee betide,

That thou should'st smile again?"—  
The evening came,

And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed;  
The flint was there, the berries at his  
head.

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-  
yard,

And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,  
Work through the clayey soil and  
gravel hard,

To see skull, coffin'd bones, and  
funeral stole;

Pitying each form that hungry Death  
hath marr'd,

And filling it once more with human  
soul?

Ah! this is holiday to what was felt  
When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould,  
as though

One glance did fully all its secrets tell;  
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know

Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well;  
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to  
grow,

Like to a native lily of the dell:  
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
Hersilk had play'd in purple phantasies,  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than  
stone,

And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone

Those dainties made to still an infant's  
cries:

Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd  
her care,

But to throw back at times her veiling  
hair.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering  
Until her heart felt pity to the core

At sight of such a dismal laboring,  
And so she kneel'd, with her locks  
all hoar,

And put her lean hands to the horrid  
thing:

Three hours they labor'd at this travail  
sore;

At last they felt the kernel of the grave,  
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

Ah! wherefore all this wormy circum-  
stance?

Why linger at the yawning tomb so  
long?

O for the gentleness of old Romance,  
The simple plaining of a minstrel's  
song!

Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,  
For here, in truth, it doth not well  
belong

To speak:—O turn thee to the very tale,  
And taste the music of that vision pale.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword  
They cut away no formless monster's  
head,

But one, whose gentleness did well accord  
With death, as life. The ancient  
harps have said,

Love never dies, but lives, immortal  
Lord :

If Love impersonate was ever dead,  
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd  
'Twas love ; cold, —dead indeed, but not  
dethroned.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,  
And then the prize was all for Isabel :  
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden  
comb,  
And all around each eye's sepulchral  
cell

Pointed each fringed lash ; the smeared  
loam  
With tears, as chill as a dripping well,  
She drench'd away : —and still she  
comb'd, and kept  
Sighing all day —and still she kiss'd, and  
wept.

Then in a silken scarf, sweet with the  
dews

Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,  
And divine liquids come with odorous  
ooze

Through the cold serpent pipe refresh-  
fully, —  
She wrapp'd it up ; and for its tomb did  
choose

A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by  
And cover'd it with mould and, o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever  
wet.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and  
sun,

And she forgot the blue above the trees,  
And she forgot the dells where waters  
run,

And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze ;  
She had no knowledge when the day  
was done,

And the new morn she saw not : but  
in peace

Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,  
Whence thick, and green, and beauti-  
ful it grew,  
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers  
Of Basil-tufts in Florence ; for it drew

Nurture besides, and life, from human  
fears,

From the fast mouldering head there  
shut from view :  
So that the jewel, safely casketed,  
Came forth, and in perfum'd leaflets  
spread.

O Melancholy, linger here awhile !  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !  
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,  
Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us — O sigh !  
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and  
smile ;

Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits,  
heavily,  
And make a pale light in your cypress  
glooms, [tombs.  
Tinting with silver wan your marble

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,  
From the deep throat of sad Mel-  
pomene !

Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,  
And touch the strings into a mystery ;  
Sound mournfully upon the winds and  
low ;

For simple Isabel is soon to be  
Among the dead : She withers, like a  
palm  
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;  
Let not quick Winter chill its dying  
hour ! —

It may not be — those Baalites of pelf,  
Her brethren, noted the continual  
shower  
From her dead eyes ; and many a curious  
elf,

Among her kindred, wonder'd that  
such dower  
Of youth and beauty should be thrown  
aside

By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

And, furthermore, her brethren won-  
der'd much

Why she sat drooping by the Basil  
green,

And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;  
Greatly they wonder'd what the thing  
might mean

They could not surely give belief, that  
such

A very nothing would have power to  
wean

Her from her own fair youth, and  
pleasures gay, [lay.  
And even remembrance of her love's de-

Therefore they watch'd a time when they  
might sift

This hidden whim; and long they  
watch'd in vain;

For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,  
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain;  
And when she left, she hurried back, as  
swift

As bird on wing to breast its eggs  
again;

And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there  
Beside her Basil, weeping through her  
hair.

Yet they contriv'd to steal the Basil-pot,  
And to examine it in secret place:

The thing was vile with green and livid  
spot,

And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face;  
The guerdon of their murder they had  
got,

And so left Florence in a moment's  
space,

Never to turn again.—Away they went,  
With blood upon their heads, to banish-  
ment.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away!

O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!

O Echo, Echo, on some other day,  
From isles Lethæan, sigh to us—O sigh!  
Spirits of grief, sing not your "Well-a-  
way!"

For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die:  
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,  
Now they have ta'en away her Basil  
sweet.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless  
things,

Asking for her lost Basil amorously:  
And with melodious chuckle in the  
strings

Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes  
would cry

After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,  
To ask him where her Basil was; and  
why

'Twas hid from her: "For cruel 'tis,"  
said she,

"To steal my Basil-pot away from me."

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,  
Imploring for her Basil to the last.

No heart was there in Florence but did  
mourn

In pity of her love, so overcast.

And a sad ditty of this story born  
From mouth to mouth through all the  
country pass'd:

Still is the burthen sung—"O cruelty,  
"To steal my Basil-pot away from  
me!" 1818. 1830.

### THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

ST. AGNES' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the  
frozen grass,

And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers,  
while he told

His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, with-  
out a death,

Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while  
his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy  
man

Then takes his lamp, and riseth from  
his knees,

And back returneth, meagre, barefoot,  
wan,

Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:  
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem  
to freeze,

Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:  
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb or-  
t'ries,

He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails  
To think how they may ache in icy  
hoods and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little  
door,

And scarce three steps, ere Music's  
golden tongue

Flatter'd to tears this aged man and  
poor;

But no—already had his deathbell rung;  
The joys of all his life were said and  
sung:

His was harsh penance on St. Agnes'  
Eve:

Another way he went, and soon among  
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
And all night kept awake, for sinners'  
sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the pre-  
lude soft;

And so it chanc'd, for many a door was  
wide,

From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to  
chide:

The level chambers, ready with their  
pride,

Were glowing to receive a thousand  
guests :

The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
Star'd where upon their heads the cor-  
nice rests,  
With hair blown back, and wings put  
cross-wise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
Numerous as shadows haunting faintly  
The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with  
triumphs gay

Of old romance. These let us wish  
away,

And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady  
there,

Whose heart had brooded, all that win-  
try day,

On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly  
care,

As she had heard old dames full many  
times declare.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of  
delight,

And soft adorings from their loves re-  
ceive

Upon the honey'd middle of the night  
If ceremonies, due they did aright ;

As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lily  
white ;

Nor look behind, nor sideways, but re-  
quire

Of Heaven with upward eyes for all  
that they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful  
Madeline ;

The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard : her maiden eyes  
divine,

Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping  
train

Pass by—she heeded not at all : in vain  
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,  
And back retir'd ; not cool'd by high  
disdain,

But she saw not : her heart was other-  
where :

She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweet-  
est of the year.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless  
eyes,

Anxious her lips, her breathing quick  
and short :

The hallow'd hour was near at hand :  
she sighs

Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd  
resort

Of whisperers in anger, or in sport ;  
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and  
scorn,

Hoodwink'd with faery fancy ; all amot,  
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs un-  
shorn,

And all the bliss to be before to-morrow  
morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the  
moors,

Had come young Porphyro, with heart  
on fire

For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he,  
and implores

All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
That he might gaze and worship all  
unseen ;

Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in  
sooth such things have been.

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper  
tell :

All eyes be muffled, or a hundred  
swords

Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous  
citadel :

For him, those chambers held barbarian  
hordes,

Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
Against his lineage : not one breast  
affords

Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body  
and in soul.

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature  
came,

Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's  
flame,

Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond  
The sound of merriment and chorus  
bland :

He startled her ; but soon she knew his  
face,

And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied  
hand,

Saying, " Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee  
from this place ;

They are all here to-night, the whole  
blood-thirsty race !

Get hence ! get hence ! there's dwarfish  
Hildebrand ;  
He had a fever late, and in the fit  
He cursed thee and thine, both house  
and land :  
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not  
a whit  
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me !  
flit !  
Flit like a ghost away."—" Ah, Gossip  
dear,  
We're safe enough ; here in this arm-  
chair sit,  
And tell me how "—" Good Saints ! not  
here, not here ;  
" Follow me, child, or else these stones  
will be thy bier."

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,  
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty  
plume ;  
And as she mutter'd " Well-a—well-a-  
day !"  
He found him in a little moonlight  
room,  
Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
" Now tell me where is Madeline,"  
said he,  
" O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom.  
Which none but secret sisterhood may  
see,  
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving  
piously."

" St. Agnes ! Ah ! it is St. Agnes' Eve—  
Yet men will murder upon holy days :  
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,  
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and  
Fays,  
To venture so : it fills me with amaze  
To see thee, Porphyro !—St. Agnes' Eve !  
God's help ! my lady fair the conjurer  
plays  
This very night ; good angels her de-  
ceive !  
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle  
time to grieve."

Feebly she laugheth in the languid  
moon,  
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
Who keepeth clos'd a wondrous riddle-  
book,  
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.  
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when  
she told  
His lady's purpose ; and he scarce could  
brook

Tears, at the thought of those enchant-  
ments cold,  
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends  
old.

Sudden a thought came like a full-  
blown rose,  
Flushing his brow, and in his pained  
heart  
Made purple riot : then doth he propose  
A stratagem, that makes the beldame  
start :  
" A cruel man and impious thou art :  
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and  
dream  
Alone with her good angels, far apart  
From wicked men like thee. Go, go !—  
I deem  
Thou canst not surely be the same that  
thou didst seem.

" I will not harm her, by all saints I  
swear,"  
Quoth Porphyro : " O may I ne'er find  
grace  
When my weak voice shall whisper its  
last prayer,  
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:  
Good Angela, believe me by these tears ;  
Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's  
ears,  
And beard them, though they be more  
fang'd than wolves and bears."

" Ah ! why wilt thou affright a feeble  
soul ?  
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken church-  
yard thing,  
Whose passing-bell may ere the mid-  
night toll ;  
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and  
evening,  
Were never miss'd." Thus plaining,  
doth she bring  
A gentler speech from burning Por-  
phyro ;  
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
That Angela gives promise she will do  
Whatever he shall wish, betide her wea-  
or woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy -  
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there  
hide  
Him in a closet, of such privacy  
That he might see her beauty unespied,  
And win perhaps that night a peerless  
bride,



While legion'd fairies pac'd the coverlet,  
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.

Never on such a night have lovers met,  
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:

"All cates and dainties shall be stored there

Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame

Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,

For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare

On such a catering trust my dizzy head.

Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer

The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed.

Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

Sosaying, she hobbled off with busy fear.

The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd:

The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear

To follow her; with aged eyes aghast

From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,

Through many a dusky gallery, they gain

The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;

Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.

His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade

Old Angela was feeling for the stair,

When Madeline, St Agnes' charmed maid,

Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:

With silver taper's light, and pious care,

She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led

To a safe level matting. Now prepare,

Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;

She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove

fray'd and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;

Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:

She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin

To spirits of the air, and visions wide:

No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!

But to her heart, her heart was voluble,

Paining with eloquence her balmy side;  
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell

Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple arch'd there was,

All garlanded with carven imag'ries

Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass.

And diamonded with panes of quaint device,

Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,

As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;

And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,

And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,

A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,

And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,

As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;

Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,

And on her silver cross soft amethyst,

And on her hair a glory, like a saint:

She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,

Save wings, for heaven: Porphyro grew faint:

She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,

Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;

Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one

Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees

Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees;

Half-hidden, like a mermaid in seaweed,

Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,

In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,

But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,

In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay.

Until the popped warmth of sleep oppress'd

Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued  
away;  
Flown, like a thought, until the mor-  
row-day;  
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and  
pain;  
Clasp'd like a missal where swart  
Paynims pray;  
Blinded alike from sunshine and from  
rain,  
As though a rose should shut, and be a  
bud again.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so en-  
tranced,  
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
And listen'd to her breathing, if it  
chanced  
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;  
Which when he heard, that minute did  
he bless,  
And breath'd himself: then from the  
closet crept,  
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,  
And over the hush'd carpet, silent,  
stepped,  
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where,  
lo!—how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded  
moon  
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
A table, and, half-anguish'd, threw  
thereon  
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and  
jet :—  
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet !  
The boisterous, midnight, festive cla-  
rion,  
The kettle-drum, and far-heard cla-  
rionet,  
Affray his ears, though but in dying  
tone :—  
The hall door shuts again, and all the  
noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
In blanched linen, smooth, and laven-  
der'd,  
While he from forth the closet brought  
a heap  
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and  
gourd ;  
With jellies soother than the creamy  
curd, [mon ;  
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinna-  
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
From Fez ; and spiced dainties, every  
one, [banon.  
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Le-

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing  
hand  
On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they  
stand  
In the retired quiet of the night,  
Filling the chilly room with perfume  
light.—  
“ And now, my love, my seraph fair,  
awake !  
Thou art my heaven, and I thine  
hermit :  
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes'  
sake,  
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my  
soul doth ache.”

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved  
arm  
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her  
dream  
By the dusk curtains :—'twas a mid-  
night charm  
Impossible to melt as iced stream :  
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight  
gleam :  
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies :  
It seem'd he never, never could redeem  
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes ;  
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed  
phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—  
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tend-  
erest be,  
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since  
mute,  
In Provence call'd, “ La belle dame sans  
mercy : ”  
Close to her ear touching the melody :—  
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft  
moan :  
He ceased—she panted quick—and sud-  
denly  
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone :  
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-  
sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:  
There was a painful change, that night  
expell'd  
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep  
At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
And moan forth witless words with  
many a sigh ; [keep ;  
While still her gaze on Porphyro would  
Who knelt, with joined hands and  
piteous eye, [dreamingly.  
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now  
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;  
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:  
How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!  
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!  
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far  
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star  
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;  
Into her dream he melted, as the rose  
Blendeth its odor with the violet,—  
Solution sweet: meantime the frost wind blows  
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet  
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:  
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"  
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:  
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!  
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—  
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?  
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—  
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!  
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?  
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dyed?  
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
After so many hours of toil and quest,  
A famish'd pilgrim,—saved by miracle.  
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest

Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well  
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,  
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:  
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—  
The bloated wassaillers will never heed:—  
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;  
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—  
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:  
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,  
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—  
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—  
In all the house was heard no human sound.  
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;  
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;  
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;  
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;  
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flagon by his side:  
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:  
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—  
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—  
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago  
These lovers fled away into the storm.  
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form



Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
 Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old  
 Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;  
 The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
 For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

*January, 1819. 1820.*

### THE EVE OF SAINT MARK

#### A FRAGMENT

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell;  
 Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,  
 That call'd the folks to evening prayer;  
 The city streets were clean and fair  
 From wholesome drench of April rains;  
 And, on the western window panes,  
 The chilly sunset faintly told  
 Of unmat'ur'd green valleys cold,  
 Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,  
 Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,  
 Of primroses by shelter'd rills,  
 And daisies on the aguish hills.  
 Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell:  
 The silent streets were crowded well  
 With staid and pious companies,  
 Warm from their fire-side oratories;  
 And moving, with demurest air,  
 To even-song, and vesper prayer.  
 Each arch'd porch, and entry low,  
 Was fill'd with patient folk and slow,  
 With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,  
 While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceas'd, the prayers begun,  
 And Bertha had not yet half done  
 A curious volume, patch'd and torn,  
 That all day long, from earliest morn,  
 Had taken captive her two eyes,  
 Among its golden broideries;  
 Perplex'd her with a thousand things,—  
 The stars of Heaven, and angels' wings,  
 Martyrs in a fiery blaze,  
 Azure saints and silver rays,  
 Moses' breastplate, and the seven  
 Candlesticks John saw in Heaven,  
 The winged Lion of St. Mark,  
 And the Covenantal Ark,  
 With its many mysteries,  
 Cherubim and golden mice.

Bertha was a maiden fair,  
 Dwelling in th' old Minster-square;  
 From her fire-side she could see,  
 Sidelong, its rich antiquity,

Far as the Bishop's garden-wall;  
 Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,  
 Full-leav'd, the forest had outstript,  
 By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,  
 So shelter'd by the mighty pile.  
 Bertha arose, and read awhile,  
 With forehead 'gainst the window-pane  
 Again she try'd, and then again,  
 Until the dusk eve left her dark  
 Upon the legend of St. Mark.  
 From plated lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
 She lifted up her soft warm chin.  
 With aching neck and swimming eyes,  
 And daz'd with saintly imagines.

All was gloom, and silent all,  
 Save now and then the still foot-fall  
 Of one returning homewards late,  
 Past the echoing minster-gate.  
 The clamorous daws, that all the day  
 Above tree-tops and towers play,  
 Pair by pair had gone to rest,  
 Each in its ancient belfry nest,  
 Where asleep they fall betimes,  
 To music and the drowsy chimes.

All was silent, all was gloom,  
 Abroad and in the homely room:  
 Down she sat, poor cheated soul;  
 And struck a lamp from the dismal coal;  
 Lean'd forward, with bright drooping  
 hair

And slant look, full against the glare.  
 Her shadow, in uneasy guise,  
 Hover'd about, a giant size,  
 On ceiling-beam and old oak chair,  
 The parrot's cage, and panel square;  
 And the warm angled winter-screen,  
 On which were many monsters seen,  
 Call'd doves of Siam, Lima mice,  
 And legless birds of Paradise,  
 Macaw, and tender Avadavat,  
 And silken-furr'd Angora cat.  
 Untir'd she read, her shadow still  
 Glower'd about, as it would fill  
 The room with wildest forms and shades.  
 As though some ghostly queen of spades  
 Had come to mock behind her back.  
 And dance, and ruffle her garments  
 black.

Untir'd she read the legend page,  
 Of holy Mark, from youth to age,  
 On land, on sea, in pagan chains,  
 Rejoicing for his many pains.  
 Sometimes the learned eremite,  
 With golden star, or dagger bright,  
 Referr'd to pious poesies  
 Written in smallest crow-quill size  
 Beneath the text: and thus the rhyme

Was parcel'd out from time to time :  
 — " Alas writeth he of swevens,  
 Men han before they wake in bliss,  
 Whanne that hir friendes thinke him  
 bound  
 In crimped shroude farre under grounde :  
 And how a litling childe mote be  
 Assaunt er its nativite,  
 Gif that the modre (God her blesse !)  
 Kepe in solitarinesse,  
 And kissen devout the holy croce.  
 Of Goddes love, and Sathan's force,—  
 He writith ; and thinges many mo  
 Of swiche thinges I may not show.  
 Bot I must tellen verilie  
 Somdel of Sainte Cicilie,  
 And chiefly what he auctorethe  
 Of Sainte Markis life and detha : "

At length her constant eyelids come  
 Upon the fervent martyrdom ;  
 Then lastly to his holy shrine,  
 Exalt amid the tapers' shine  
 At Venice,—  
*January and September, 1819. 1848.*

## ODE ON INDOLENCE

" They toil not, neither do they spin."

ONE morn before me were three figures  
 seen,  
 With bow'd necks, and join'd hands,  
 side-faced ;  
 And one behind the other stepp'd serene,  
 In placid sandals, and in white robes  
 graced ;  
 They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn,  
 When shifted round to see the other  
 side ;  
 They came again ; as when the urn  
 once more  
 Is shifted round, the first seen shades  
 return ;  
 And they were strange to me, as may  
 betide  
 With vases, to one deep in Phidian  
 lore.

How is it, Shadows ! that I knew ye not ?  
 How came ye muffled in so hush a  
 mask ?  
 Was it a silent deep-disguised plot  
 To steal away, and leave without a  
 task  
 My idle days ? Ripe was the drowsy  
 hour ;  
 The blissful cloud of summer-indo-  
 lence

Benumbed my eyes ; my pulse grew  
 less and less ;  
 Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath  
 no flower :  
 O why did ye not melt, and leave my  
 sense  
 Unhaunted quite of all but—noth-  
 ingness ?

A third time passed they by, and, pass-  
 ing, turn'd  
 Each one the face a moment whiles to  
 me ;  
 Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd  
 And ach'd for wings, because I knew  
 the three ;  
 The first was a fair Maid, and Love her  
 name ;  
 The second was Ambition, pale of  
 cheek,  
 And ever watchful with fatigued  
 eye ;  
 The last, whom I love more, the more of  
 blame  
 Is heap'd upon her, maiden most un-  
 meek,—  
 I knew to be my demon Poesy.

They faded, and forsooth ! I wanted  
 wings :  
 O folly ! What is Love ? and where is  
 it ?  
 And for that poor Ambition ! it springs  
 From a man's little heart's short fever-  
 fit ;  
 For Poesy !—no,—she has not a joy,—  
 At least for me,—so sweet as drowsy  
 noons,  
 And evenings steep'd in honied in-  
 dolence ;  
 O, for an age so sheltered from annoy,  
 That I may never know how change  
 the moons,  
 Or hear the voice of busy common-  
 sense !

And once more came they by ;—alas !  
 wherefore ?  
 My sleep had been embroider'd with  
 dim dreams ;  
 My soul had been a lawn besprinkled  
 o'er  
 With flowers, and stirring shades, and  
 baffled beams : [fell,  
 The morn was clouded, but no shower  
 Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears  
 of May ;  
 The open casement press'd a new-  
 leav'd vine,

Let in the budding warmth and thros-  
tle's lay;  
O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid fare-  
well!  
Upon your skirts had fallen no tears  
of mine.

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot  
raise  
My head cool-bedded in the flowery  
grass;  
For I would not be dieted with praise,  
A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!  
Fade softly from my eyes, and be once  
more  
In masque-like Figures on the dreamy  
urn;  
Farewell! I yet have visions for the  
night,  
And for the day faint visions there is  
store;  
Vanish, ye Phantoms! from my  
idle spright,  
Into the clouds, and never more re-  
turn! *March, 1819. 1848.*

## ODE

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth!  
Have ye souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new?  
Yes, and those of heaven commune  
With the spheres of sun and moon;  
With the noise of fountains wond'rous,  
And the parle of voices thund'rous;  
With the whisper of heaven's trees  
And one another, in soft ease  
Seated on Elysian lawns  
Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns;  
Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
Where the daisies are rose-scented,  
And the rose herself has got  
Perfume which on earth is not;  
Where the nightingale doth sing  
Not a senseless, tranced thing,  
But divine melodious truth;  
Philosophic numbers smooth;  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again;  
And the souls ye left behind you  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,  
Never slumber'd, never cloying.  
Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week;

Of their sorrows and delights;  
Of their passions and their spites;  
Of their glory and their shame;  
What doth strengthen and what maim.  
Thus ye teach us, every day,  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth!  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new!  
*1819. 1830.*

## ODE TO PSYCHE

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless num-  
bers, wrung  
By sweet enforcement and remem-  
brance dear,  
And pardon that thy secrets should be  
sung  
Even into thine own soft-conched ear;  
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see  
The winged Psyche with awaken'd  
eyes?  
I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,  
And, on the sudden, fainting with  
surprise,  
Saw two fair creatures, couched side by  
side  
In deepest grass, beneath the whis-  
p'ring roof  
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where  
there ran  
A brooklet, scarce espied:  
Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fra-  
grant-eyed,  
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,  
They lay calm-breathing on the bedded  
grass;  
Their arms embracéd, and their pin-  
ions too;  
Their lips touch'd not, but had not  
bade adieu,  
As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,  
And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
At tender eye-dawn of aureorean love:  
The winged boy I knew;  
But who wast thou, O happy, happy  
dove?  
His Psyche true!

O latest born and loveliest vision far  
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!  
Fairer than Phoebe's sapphire-region'd  
star,  
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the  
Fairer than these, though temple thou  
hast none,  
Nor altar heap'd with flowers —

Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan  
Upon the midnight hours ;  
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense  
sweet  
From chain-swung censer teeming ;  
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

O brightest ! though too late for antique  
vows,  
Too, too late for the fond believing  
lyre,

When holy were the haunted forest  
boughs,

Holy the air, the water, and the fire ;

Yet even in these days so far retir'd  
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,  
Fluttering among the faint Olymp-  
ians,

I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.  
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
Upon the midnight hours ;

Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy in-  
cense sweet

From swung censer teeming ;

Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy  
heat

Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane  
In some untrodden region of my mind,

Where branched thoughts, new grown  
with pleasant pain,

Instead of pines shall murmur in the  
wind :

Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd  
trees

Fledge the wild-ridged mountains  
steep by steep ;

And there by zephyrs, streams, and  
birds, and bees,

The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to  
sleep ;

And in the midst of this wide quietness  
A rosy sanctuary will I dress

With the wreath'd trellis of a working  
brain,

With buds, and bells, and stars with-  
out a name,

With all the gardener Fancy e'er could  
feign,

Who breeding flowers, will never breed  
the same : [light

And there shall be for thee all soft de-  
That shadowy thought can win,

A bright torch, and a casement ope at  
night,

To let the warm Love in !

April, 1819. 1820.

# ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
Thou foster-child of silence and slow  
time,

Sylvan historian, who canst thus ex-  
press

A flowery tale more sweetly than our  
rhyme :

What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about  
thy shape

Of deities or mortals, or of both,

In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ?

What men or gods are these ? What  
maidens loth ?

What mad pursuit ? What struggle to  
escape ?

What pipes and timbrels ? What  
wild ecstasy ?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those un-  
heard

Are sweeter ; therefore, ye soft pipes,  
play on ;

Not to the sensual ear, but, more en-  
dear'd,

Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone :

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou  
canst not leave

Thy song, nor ever can those trees be  
bare ;

Bold Lover, never, never canst thou  
kiss

Though winning near the goal—yet, do  
not grieve ;

She cannot fade, though thou hast not  
thy bliss,

For ever wilt thou love, and she be  
fair !

Ah, happy, happy boughs ! that cannot  
shed

Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring  
adieu ;

And, happy melodist, unwearied,

For ever piping songs for ever new ;

More happy love ! more happy, happy  
love !

For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,  
For ever panting, and for ever

young ;

All breathing human passion far above,  
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and

cloy'd,

A burning forehead, and a parching  
tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice ?  
To what green altar, O mysterious

priest,

Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the  
skies,  
And all her silken flanks with garlands  
dressed?  
What little town by river or sea shore,  
Or mountain-built with peaceful cit-  
adel,  
Is emptied of this folk, this pious  
morn?  
And, little town, thy streets for ever-  
more  
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
Why thou art desolate, can e'er re-  
turn.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with  
brede  
Of marble men and maidens over  
wrought,  
With forest branches and the trodden  
weed;  
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of  
thought  
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!  
When old age shall this generation  
waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other  
woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom  
thou say'st,  
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—  
that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need  
to know.

1819. January, 1820.

#### ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numb-  
ness pains  
My sense, as though of hemlock I had  
drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards  
had sunk:  
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thine happi-  
ness.—  
That thou, light winged Dryad of  
the trees,  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and shadows  
numberless,  
Singer of summer in full-throated  
ease.  
O, for a draught of vintage! that hath  
been [earth,  
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved

Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-  
burnt mirth!  
O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippo-  
crene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the  
brim,  
And purple-stained mouth;  
That I might drink, and leave the  
world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the  
forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast  
never known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each  
other groan;  
Where palsied shakes a few, sad, last gray  
hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-  
thin, and dies;  
Where but to think is to be full of  
sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep her  
lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond  
to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his  
pards,  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain perplexes and  
retards:  
Already with thee! tender is the night,  
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her  
throne,  
Cluster'd around by all her starry  
Fays;  
But here there is no light,  
Save what from heaven is with the  
breezes blown  
Through verdurous glooms and  
winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my  
feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the  
boughs,  
But, in enbalmed darkness, guess each  
sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month  
endows  
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree  
wild;



White hawthorn, and the pastoral  
 eglantine;  
 Fast fading violets cover'd up in  
 leaves;  
     And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy  
 wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on  
 summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful  
 Death,  
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused  
 rhyme,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath;  
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
 To cease upon the midnight with no  
 pain,  
     While thou art pouring forth thy  
 soul abroad  
     In such an ecstasy!  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have  
 ears in vain—  
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal  
 Bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee  
 down;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was  
 heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a  
 path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when,  
 sick for home,  
     She stood in tears amid the alien  
 corn;  
     The same that oft-times hath  
 Charm'd magic casements, opening  
 on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands for-  
 lorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole  
 self!  
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem  
 fades  
 Past the near meadows, over the still  
 stream, [deep  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried  
 In the next valley-glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music:—Do I wake or  
 sleep? *May, 1819. July, 1819.*

## ODE ON MELANCHOLY

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist  
 Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poi-  
 sonous wine;  
 Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
 By nightshade, ruby grape of Proser-  
 pine;  
 Make not your rosary of yew-berries,  
 Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth  
 be  
     Your mournful Psyche, nor the  
 downy owl  
 A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;  
 For shade to shade will come too  
 drowsily,  
     And drown the wakeful anguish of  
 the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
 Sudden from heaven like a weeping  
 cloud,  
 That fosters the droop-headed flowers  
 all,  
     And hides the green hill in an April  
 shroud;  
 Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
 Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-  
 wave,  
     Or on the wealth of globed peonies;  
 Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
 Emprison her soft hand, and let her  
 rave,  
     And feed deep, deep upon her peer-  
 less eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that  
 must die;  
 And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
 Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
 Turning to poison while the bee-  
 mouth sips:  
 Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
 Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran  
 shrine,  
     Though seen of none save him whose  
 strenuous tongue  
 Can burst Joy's grape against his palate  
 fine:  
     His soul shall taste the sadness of her  
 might,  
     And be among her cloudy trophies  
 hung. *1819. 1820.*

## TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing  
 sun;

Conspiring with him how to load and  
bless

With fruit the vines that round the  
thatch-eves run ;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-  
trees,

And fill all fruit with ripeness to the  
core ;

To swell the gourd, and plump the  
hazel shells

With a sweet kernel ; to set budding  
more,

And still more, later flowers for the  
bees,

Until they think warm days will never  
cease,

For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their  
clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy  
store ?

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may  
find

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing  
wind ;

Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies,  
while thy hook

Spare the next swath and all its  
twined flowers ;

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost  
keep

Steady thy laden head across a brook ;  
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last ooziings hours  
by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay,  
where are they ?

Think not of them, thou hast thy mu-  
sic too.—

While barred clouds bloom the soft-  
dying day,

And touch the stubble-plains with  
rosy hue ;

Then in a wallful choir the small gnats  
mourn

Among the river shallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or  
dies ;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from  
hilly bourn ;

Hedge-crickets sing ; and now with  
treble soft [croft ;

The red-breast whistles from a garden-  
And gathering swallows twitter in  
the skies.

*September, 1819. 1820.*

## HYPERION

### A FRAGMENT

#### BOOK I,

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of  
morn,

Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one  
star,

Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his lair ;  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was  
there,

Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the  
feather'd grass,

But where the dead leaf fell, there did  
it rest.

A stream went voiceless by, still dead-  
ened more

By reason of his fallen divinity  
Spreading a shade : the Naiad 'mid her  
reeds

Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-  
marks went,

No further than to where his feet had  
stray'd,

And slept there since. Upon the sodden  
ground

His old right hand lay nerveless, listless,  
dead.

Unscaptred ; and his realmless eyes  
were closed ;

While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning  
to the Earth,

His ancient mother, for some comfort  
yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him  
from his place ;

But there came one, who with a kindred  
hand

Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bend-  
ing low

With reverence, though to one who knew  
it not.

She was a Goddess of the infant world ;  
By her in stature the tall Amazon

Had stood a pigmy's height : she would  
have ta'en

Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;  
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.

Her face was large as that of Memphian  
sphinx,

Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,

When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.

But oh! how unlike marble was that face:

How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.

There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun:

As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen

rear  
Was with its stored thunder laboring up.  
One hand she press'd upon that aching

spot  
Where beats the human heart, as if just

there,  
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain:

The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his ear

Leaning with parted lips, some words  
she spake

In solemn tenor and deep organ tone:  
Some mourning words, which in our

feeble tongue  
Would come in these like accents; O

how frail  
To that large utterance of the early

Gods!  
"Saturn, look up!—though wherefore,

poor old King?  
I have no comfort for thee, no not one:

I cannot say, 'O wherefore sleepest  
thou?' [earth

For heaven is parted from thee, and the  
Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a

God;  
And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,

Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all  
the air

Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.  
Thy thunder, conscious of the new com-

mand,  
Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house:

And thy sharp lightning in unpractised  
hands

Scorches and burns our once serene  
domain.

O aching time! O moments big as years!  
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous

truth,  
And press it so upon our weary griefs

That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
Saturn, sleep on:—O thoughtless, why

did I  
Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?

Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?  
Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I

weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-  
night,

Those green-rob'd senators of mighty  
woods,

Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the  
earnest stars,

Dream, and so dream all night without  
a stir,

Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies

off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave;

So came these words and went; the  
while in tears

She touch'd her fair large forehead to  
the ground,

Just where her falling hair might be  
outspread

A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.  
One moon, with alteration slow, had

shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,

And still these two were postured mo-  
tionless,

Like natural sculpture in cathedral cav-  
ern;

The frozen God still couchant on the  
earth,

And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet:  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up

His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom  
gone,

And all the gloom and sorrow of the  
place,

And that fair kneeling Goddess; and  
then spake,

As with a palsied tongue, and while his  
beard

Shook horrid with such aspen-malady:  
"O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,

Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face;  
Look up, and let me see our doom in it;

Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
Is Saturn's; tell me, if thou hear'st the

voice  
Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling

brow,  
Naked and bare of its great diadem,

Peers like the front of Saturn. Who  
had power

To make me desolate? whence came the  
strength?

How was it nurtur'd to such bursting  
forth,

While Fate seem'd strangled in my  
nervous grasp?

But it is so; and I am smother'd up,  
And buried from all godlike exercise

Of influence benign on planets pale,



Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
Of peaceful sway above man's harvest-  
ing,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in.—I am gone  
Away from my own bosom: I have left  
My strong identity, my real self,  
Somewhere between the throne, and  
where I sit  
Here on this spot of earth. Search,  
Thea, search!  
Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them  
round  
Upon all space: space starr'd, and lorn  
of light;  
Space region'd with life-air; and barren  
void;  
Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.—  
Search, Thea, search! and tell me, if  
thou seest  
A certain shape or shadow, making way  
With wings or chariot fierce to repossess  
A heaven he lost erewhile: it must—it  
must  
Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be  
King.  
Yes, there must be a golden victory;  
There must be Gods thrown down, and  
trumpets blown  
Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival  
Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,  
Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir  
Of strings in hollow shells; and there  
shall be  
Beautiful things made new, for the sur-  
prise  
Of the sky-children; I will give com-  
mand:  
Thea! Thea! Thea! where is Saturn?"

This passion lifted him upon his feet,  
And made his hands to struggle in the air.  
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with  
sweat,  
His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing  
deep;  
A little time, and then again he snatch'd  
Utterance thus.—"But cannot I create?  
Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth  
Another world, another universe,  
To overbear and crumble this to nought?  
Where is another chaos? Where?"—  
That word [quake  
Found way unto Olympus, and made  
The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full  
of awe.

"This cheers our fallen house: come  
to our friends,  
O Saturn! come away, and give them  
heart:  
I know the covert, for thence came I  
hither."  
Thus brief; then with beseeching eyes  
she went  
With backward footing through the  
shade a space:  
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the  
way  
Through aged boughs, that yielded like  
the mist  
Which eagles cleave upmounting from  
their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears  
were shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like  
woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of  
scribe:  
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-  
bound.  
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more.  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's  
voice.  
But one of the whole mammoth-brood  
still kept  
His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty;—  
Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire  
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming  
up  
From man to the sun's God; yet  
unsecure:  
For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shuddered  
he—  
Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated  
screech,  
Or the familiar visiting of one  
Upon the first toll of his passing-bell.  
Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp:  
But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve.  
Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace  
bright  
Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold.  
And touch'd with shade of bronzed  
obelisks,  
Glar'd a blood-red through all its thou-  
sand courts,  
Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries;  
And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds  
Flush'd angerly: while sometimes eagle's  
wings,  
Unseen before by Gods or wondering  
men, [were heard.  
Darken'd the place; and neighing steeds

fore by Gods or wondering

he would taste the spicy  
s

reath'd aloft from sacred

feets, his ample palate took  
mous brass and metal sick :  
en harbor'd in the sleepy

completion of fair day,—  
ie upon exalted couch  
in the arms of melody,  
y the pleasant hours of ease  
blossal, on from hall to hall ;  
ithin each aisle and deep

minions in close clusters

ull of fear ; like anxious men  
plains gather in panting

uakes jar their battlements  
vers.

hile Saturn, rous'd from icy

or step with Thea through  
ods,  
iving twilight in the rear,  
pon the threshold of the

wont, his palace-door flew

silence, save what solemn

e serious Zephyrs, gave of

ing sounds, slow-breathed  
es ;

se in vermeil tint and shape,  
soft, and coolness to the eye,  
severe magnificence  
own, for the God to enter in.

ut he enter'd full of wrath ;  
obes stream'd out beyond  
ls,  
ar, as if of earthly fire,  
away the meek ethereal

their dove-wings tremble.  
lared,

nave to nave, from vault  
t,

ers of fragrant and en-  
ed light.

nd-paved lustrous long ar-

h'd the great main cupola ;

There standing fierce beneath, he  
stamped his foot,

And from the basements deep to the high  
towers

Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before  
The quavering thunder thereupon had  
ceas'd,

His voice leapt out, despite of godlike  
ourb,

To this result : " O dreams of day and  
night !

O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !  
O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !  
O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded  
pools !

Why do I know ye ? why have I seen  
ye ? why

Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
To see and to behold these horrors new ?  
Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?

Am I to leave this haven of my rest,  
This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,  
This calm luxuriance of blissful light,  
These crystalline pavilions, and pure  
fanes,

Of all my lucent empire ? It is left  
Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine.  
The blaze, the splendor, and the sym-  
metry,

I cannot see—but darkness, death and  
darkness.

Even here, into my centre of repose,  
The shady visions come to domineer,  
Insult, and blind, and stifle up my  
pomp.—

Fall !—No, by Tellus and her briny robes !  
Over the fiery frontier of my realms

I will advance a terrible right arm  
Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel  
Jove,

And bid old Saturn take his throne  
again."—

He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier  
threat

Held struggle with his throat but came  
not forth ;

For as in theatres of crowded men  
Hubbub increases more they call out  
" Hush !"

So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms  
pale

Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and  
cold ;

And from the mirror'd level where he  
stood

A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.  
At this, through all his bulk an agony  
Crept gradual, from the feet unto the  
crown.

Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular  
 Making slow way, with head and neck  
 convuls'd  
 From over-strained might. Releas'd, he  
 fled  
 To the eastern gates, and full six dewy  
 hours  
 Before the dawn in season due should  
 blush,  
 He breath'd fierce breath against the  
 sleepy portals.  
 Clear'd them of heavy vapors, burst  
 them wide  
 Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.  
 The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode  
 Each day from east to west the heavens  
 through,  
 Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds:  
 Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold,  
 and hid,  
 But ever and anon the glancing spheres,  
 Circles, and arcs, and broad-belted  
 colure,  
 Glow'd through, and wrought upon the  
 muffling dark  
 Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir  
 deep  
 Up to the zenith,—hieroglyphics old,  
 Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers  
 Then living on the earth, with laboring  
 thought  
 Won from the gaze of many centuries;  
 Now lost, save what we find on remnants  
 huge  
 Of stone, or marble swart; their import  
 gone,  
 Their wisdom long since fled.—Two  
 wings this orb  
 Possess'd for glory, two fair argent  
 wings,  
 Ever exalted at the God's approach:  
 And now, from forth the gloom their  
 plumes immense  
 Rose, one by one, till all outspread  
 were;  
 While still the dazzling globe maintain'd  
 eclipse,  
 Awaiting for Hyperion's command.  
 Fain would he have commanded, fain  
 took throne  
 And bid the day begin, if but for change.  
 He might not:—No, though a primeval  
 God:  
 The sacred seasons might not be  
 disturb'd.  
 Therefore the operations of the dawn  
 Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.  
 Those silver wings expanded sisterly,  
 Eager to sail their orb; the porches wide

Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night;  
 And the bright Titan, phrenzied with  
 new woes,  
 Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent  
 at  
 His spirit to the sorrow of the time;  
 And all along a dismal rack of clouds,  
 Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
 He stretch'd himself in grief and radi-  
 ance faint.  
 There as he lay, the Heaven with its  
 stars  
 Look'd down on him with pity, and the  
 voice  
 Of Coelus, from the universal space,  
 Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his  
 ear.  
 "O brightest of my children dear, earth-  
 born  
 And sky-engendered, Son of Mysteries  
 All unrevealed even to the powers  
 Which met at thy creating; at whose joy  
 And palpitations sweet, and pleasure  
 soft,  
 I, Coelus, wonder, how they came an-  
 whence;  
 And at the fruits thereof what shape  
 they be,  
 Distinct, and visible; symbols divine,  
 Manifestations of that beauteous life  
 Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal  
 space;  
 Of these new-form'd art thou, O  
 brightest child!  
 Of these, thy brethren and the God-  
 desses!  
 There is sad feud among ye, and rebel-  
 lion  
 Of son against his sire. I saw him fall;  
 I saw my first-born tumbled from his  
 throne!  
 To me his arms were spread, to me his  
 voice  
 Found way from forth the thunde-  
 round his head!  
 Pale wox I and in vapors hid my face.  
 Art thou, too, near such doom? vag-  
 fear there is:  
 For I have seen my sons most unli-  
 Gods.  
 Divine ye were created, and divine  
 In sad demeanor, solemn, undisturb'd  
 Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and  
 ruled:  
 Now I behold in you fear, hope, and  
 wrath;  
 Actions of rage and passion; even as  
 I see them, on the mortal world beneath  
 In men who die.—This is the grief,  
 Son!

Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall!

Yet do thou strive; as thou art capable,  
As thou canst move about, an evident God;

And canst oppose to each malignant hour  
Ethereal presence:—I am but a voice;  
My life is but the life of winds and tides.  
No more than winds and tides can I avail:—

But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van

Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's barb

Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth!

For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.

Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,

And of thy seasons be a careful nurse.—

Ere half this region-whisper had come down,

Hyperion arose, and on the stars  
Lifted his curved lids, and kept them wide

Until it ceas'd; and still he kept them wide:

And still they were the same bright, patient stars.

Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,

Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,

And plung'd all noiseless into the deep night.

## BOOK II

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings

Hyperion slid into the rustled air.  
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place

Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.

It was a den where no insulting light  
Could glimmer on their tears; where their own groans

They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar

Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,

Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.

Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd

Ever as if just rising from a sleep,

Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns;

And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.

Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,

Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:

Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.

Cæus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,  
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyryon,

With many more, the brawniest in assault,

Were pent in regions of laborious breath;  
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep

Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs

Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramp'd and screw'd;

Without a motion, save of their big hearts

Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd  
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.

Mnemosyne was straying in the world;  
Far from her moon had Phoebe wandered;

And many else were free to roam abroad,  
But for the main, here found they covert drear.

Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque

Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor.  
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,

In dull November, and their chancel vault,

The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.

Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbor gave

Or word, or look, or action of despair.  
Cræüs was one; his ponderous iron mace

Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.

Iâpetus another; in his grasp,  
A serpent's plashy neck; its barbed tongue

Squeez'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length

Dead; and because the creature could not spit

Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove,

Next Cottus: prone he lay, chin upper-



As though in pain ; for still upon the  
flint  
He ground severe his skull, with open  
mouth  
And eyes at horrid working. Nearest  
him  
Asia, born of most enormous Caf,  
Who cost her mother Tellus keener  
pangs,  
Though feminine, than any of her sons :  
More thought than woe was in her dusky  
face,  
For she was prophesying of her glory ;  
And in her wide imagination stood  
Palm-shaded temples, and high rival  
fanés,  
By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.  
Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,  
So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk  
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.  
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelve,  
Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,  
Shadow'd Enceladus ; once tame and  
mild  
As grazing ox unworried in the meads ;  
Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted,  
wroth,  
He meditated, plotted, and even now  
Was hurling mountains in that second  
war,  
Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger  
Gods  
To hide themselves in forms of beast and  
bird.  
Nor far hence Atlas ; and beside him  
prone  
Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neigh-  
bor'd close  
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap  
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.  
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
Of Ops the queen all clouded round  
from sight ;  
No shape distinguishable, more than  
when  
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with  
the clouds :  
And many else whose names may not be  
told.  
For when the Muse's wings are air-ward  
spread,  
Who shall delay her flight ? And she  
must chant  
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had  
climb'd [depth  
With damp and slippery footing from a  
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff  
Their heads appear'd, and up their  
stature grew

Till on the level height their steps found  
ease :  
Then Thea spread abroad her trembling  
arms  
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain,  
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's  
face :  
There saw she direst strife ; the supreme  
God  
At war with all the frailty of grief,  
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,  
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all  
despair.  
Against these plagues he strove in vain ;  
for Fate  
Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,  
A disanointing poison : so that Thea,  
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him  
pass  
First onwards in, among the fallen  
tribe.  
  
As with us mortal men, the laden  
heart  
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,  
When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same  
bruise ;  
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,  
Felt faint, and would have sunk among  
the rest,  
But that he met Enceladus's eye,  
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at  
once  
Came like an inspiration ; and he  
shouted,  
"Titans, behold your God !" at which  
some groan'd ;  
Some started on their feet ; some also  
shouted ;  
Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with  
reverence ;  
And Ops, upifting her black folded veil,  
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her  
forehead wan,  
Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow  
eyes.  
There is a roaring in the bleak-grown  
pines  
When Winter lifts his voice ; there is a  
noise  
Among immortals when a God gives  
sign,  
With hushing finger, how he means to  
load  
His tongue with the full weight of utter-  
less thought,  
With thunder, and with music, and with  
pomp :

Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ;  
 Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,  
 No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,  
 Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom  
 Grew up like organ, that begins anew  
 Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,  
 Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.  
 Thus grew it up—" Not in my own sad breast,  
 Which is its own great judge and searcher out,  
 Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
 Not in the legends of the first of days,  
 Studied from that old spirit-leaved book  
 Which starry Uranus with finger bright  
 Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when the waves  
 Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom ;—  
 And the which book ye know I ever kept  
 For my firm-based footstool :—Ah, infirm !  
 Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent  
 Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,—  
 At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling  
 One against one, or two, or three, or all  
 Each several one against the other three.  
 As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods  
 Drown both, and press them both against earth's face,  
 Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath  
 Unhinges the poor world ;—not in that strife.  
 Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,  
 Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
 No, no-where can unriddle, though I search,—  
 And pore on Nature's universal scroll  
 Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,  
 The first-born of all shap'd and palpable Gods,  
 Should cower beneath what, in comparison,  
 Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,  
 O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd, ye are here !  
 O Titans, shall I say ' Arise ! '—Ye groan :  
 Shall I say ' Crouch ! '—Ye groan.  
 What can I then ?  
 O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear !

What can I ! Tell me, all ye brethren Gods,  
 How we can war, how engine our great wrath !  
 O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear  
 Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,  
 Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face  
 I see, astonished, that severe content  
 Which comes of thought and musing ;  
 give us help ! "

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,  
 Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
 But cogitation in his watery shades,  
 Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,  
 In murmurs, which his first-endeavoring tongue  
 Caught infant-like from the far foamed sands.  
 " O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-stung,  
 Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !  
 Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,  
 My voice is not a bellows unto ire.  
 Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof  
 How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop ;  
 And in the proof much comfort will I give,  
 If ye will take that comfort in its truth.  
 We fall by course of Nature's law, not force  
 Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou  
 Hast sifted well the atom-universe ;  
 But for this reason, that thou art the King.  
 And only blind from sheer supremacy,  
 One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,  
 Through which I wandered to eternal truth.  
 And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,  
 So art thou not the last ; it cannot be ;  
 Thou art not the beginning nor the end.  
 From chaos and parental darkness came Light,  
 The first fruits of that intestine broil,  
 That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends  
 Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,  
 And with it light, and light, engendering

Upon its own producer, forthwith  
 touch'd  
 The whole enormous matter into life.  
 Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
 The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest :  
 Then thou first-born, and we the giant-  
 race,  
 Found ourselves ruling new and beau-  
 teous realms.  
 Now comes the pain of truth, to whom  
 'tis pain :  
 O folly ! for to bear all naked truths,  
 And to envisage circumstance, all calm,  
 That is the top of sovereignty. Mark  
 well !  
 As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer  
 far  
 Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though  
 once chiefs ;  
 And as we show beyond that Heaven  
 and Earth  
 In form 'and shape compact and beau-  
 tiful,  
 In will, in action free, companionship,  
 And thousand other signs of purer life ;  
 So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
 A power more strong in beauty, born  
 of us  
 And fated to excel us, as we pass  
 In glory that old Darkness : nor are we  
 Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the  
 rule  
 Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull  
 soil  
 Quarrel with the proud forests it hath  
 fed,  
 And feedeth still, more comely than  
 itself ?  
 Can it deny the chiefdom of green  
 groves ?  
 Or shall the tree be envious of the dove  
 Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings  
 To wander wherewithal and find its joys ?  
 We are such forest-trees, and our fair  
 boughs  
 Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,  
 But eagles golden-feather'd, who do  
 tower  
 Above us in their beauty, and must reign  
 In right thereof ; for 'tis the eternal law  
 That first in beauty should be first in  
 might :  
 Yea, by that law, another race may drive  
 Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
 Have ye beheld the young God of the  
 Seas.  
 My disposessor ? Have ye seen his face ?  
 Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along

By noble winged creatures he hath  
 made ?  
 I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
 With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
 That it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell  
 To all my empire: farewell sad I took,  
 And hither came, to see how dolorous  
 fate  
 Had wrought upon ye ; and how I might  
 best  
 Give consolation in this woe extreme.  
 Receive the truth, and let it be your  
 balm."

Whether through pos'd conviction, or  
 disdain,  
 They guarded silence, when Oceanus  
 Left murmuring, what deepest thought  
 can tell ?  
 But so it was, none answer'd for a  
 space,  
 Save one whom none regarded, Cly-  
 mene ;  
 And yet she answer'd not, only com-  
 plain'd,  
 With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking  
 mild,  
 Thus wording timidly among the fierce :  
 " O Father, I am here the simplest  
 voice,  
 And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,  
 And this thing woe crept in among our  
 hearts,  
 There to remain for ever, as I fear :  
 I would not bode of evil, if I thought  
 So weak a creature could turn off the help  
 Which by just right should come of  
 mighty Gods ;  
 Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell  
 Of what I heard, and how it made me  
 weep.  
 And know that we had parted from all  
 hope.  
 I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore.  
 Where a sweet clime was breathed from  
 a land  
 Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and  
 flowers.  
 Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief ;  
 Too full of joy and soft delicious  
 warmth ;  
 So that I felt a movement in my heart  
 To chide, and to reproach that solitude  
 With songs of misery, music of our woes ;  
 And sat me down, and took a mouthed  
 shell  
 And murmur'd into it, and made me-  
 lody—  
 O melody no more ! for while I sang,

And with poor skill let pass into the breeze  
 The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand  
 Just opposite, an island of the sea,  
 There came enchantment with the shifting wind,  
 That did both drown and keep alive my ears.  
 I threw my shell away upon the sand,  
 And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd  
 With that new blissful golden melody.  
 A living death was in each gush of sounds,  
 Each family of rapturous hurried notes,  
 That fell, one after one, yet all at once,  
 Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string:  
 And then another, then another strain,  
 Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
 With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,  
 To hover round my head, and make me sick  
 Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,  
 And I was stopping up my frantic ears,  
 When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,  
 A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,  
 And still it cried, 'Apollo! young Apollo!  
 The morning-bright Apollo! young Apollo!'  
 I fled, it follow'd me, and cried 'Apollo!'  
 O Father, and O Brethren, had ye felt  
 Those pains of mine; O Saturn, hadst thou felt,  
 Ye would not call this too indulged tongue  
 Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard."

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook  
 That, lingering along a pebbled coast,  
 Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met,  
 And shudder'd; for the overwhelming voice  
 Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath:  
 The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves  
 In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,  
 Came booming thus, while still upon his arm  
 He lean'd; not rising, from supreme [contempt.

"Or shall we listen to the over-wise,  
 Or to the over-foolish giant, Gods?  
 Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
 That rebel Jove's whole armory were spent,  
 Not world on world upon these shoulders piled.  
 Could agonize me more than baby-words  
 In midst of this dethronement horrible.  
 Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.  
 Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile?  
 Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?  
 Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,  
 Thy scalding in the seas? What, have I rous'd  
 Your spleens with so few simple words as these?  
 O joy! for now I see ye are not lost:  
 O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes  
 Wide glaring for revenge!"—As this he said,  
 He lifted up his stature vast, and stood,  
 Still without intermission speaking thus:  
 "Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to burn,  
 And purge the ether of our enemies;  
 How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,  
 And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove,  
 Stifling that puny essence in its tent.  
 O let him feel the evil he hath done;  
 For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,  
 Much pain have I for more than loss of realms:  
 The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled;  
 Those days, all innocent of scathing war,  
 When all the fair Existences of heaven  
 Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak:—  
 That was before our brows were taught to frown,  
 Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds;  
 That was before we knew the winged thing,  
 Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
 And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
 Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced—  
 Hyperion, lo! his radiance is here!"

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,  
 And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name  
 Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,



A pallid gleam across his features stern :  
 Not savage, for he saw full many a God  
 Wroth as himself. He look'd upon  
 them all,  
 And in each face he saw a gleam of  
 light,  
 But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar  
 locks  
 Shone like the bubbling foam about a  
 keel  
 When the prow sweeps into a midnight  
 cove.  
 In pale and silver silence they remain'd,  
 Till suddenly a splendor, like the morn,  
 Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,  
 All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
 And every gulf, and every chasm old,  
 And every height, and every sullen  
 depth,  
 Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented  
 streams :  
 And all the everlasting cataracts,  
 And all the headlong torrents far and  
 near,  
 Mantled before in darkness and huge  
 shade,  
 Now saw the light and made it terrible.  
 It was Hyperion—a granite peak  
 His bright feet touch'd, and there he  
 stay'd to view  
 The misery his brilliance had betray'd  
 To the most hateful seeing of itself.  
 Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,  
 Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade  
 In midst of his own brightness, like the  
 bulk  
 Of Memnon's image at the set of sun  
 To one who travels from the dusking  
 East :  
 Sighs, too, as mournful as that Mem-  
 non's harp [tive  
 He utter'd, while his hands contempla-  
 He press'd together, and in silence  
 stood.  
 Despondence seiz'd again the fallen Gods  
 At sight of the dejected King of Day,  
 And many hid their faces from the  
 light :  
 But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes  
 Among the brotherhood ; and, at their  
 glare,  
 Uprose Iāpetus, and Cœus too,  
 And Phorcus, sea-born, and together  
 strode  
 To where he towered on his eminence.  
 There those four shouted forth old  
 Saturn's name ;  
 Hyperion from the peak loud answered,  
 " Saturn ! "

Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,  
 In whose face was no joy, though all the  
 Gods  
 Gave from their hollow throats the name  
 of " Saturn ! "

## BOOK III

THUS in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
 Amazed were those Titans utterly.  
 O leave them, Muse ! O leave them to  
 their woes ;  
 For thou art weak to sing such tumults  
 dire :  
 A solitary sorrow best befits  
 Thy lips, and antheing a lonely grief.  
 Leave them, O Muse ! for thou anon wilt  
 find  
 Many a fallen old Divinity  
 Wandering in vain about bewildered  
 shores.  
 Meantime touch piously the Delphic  
 harp,  
 And not a wind of heaven but will  
 breathe  
 In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute ;  
 For lo ! 'tis for the Father of all verse.  
 Flush every thing that hath a vermeil  
 hue,  
 Let the rose glow intense and warm the  
 air,  
 And let the clouds of even and of morn  
 Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills ;  
 Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
 Cold as a bubbling well ; let faint-lipp'd  
 shells,  
 On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion  
 turn  
 Through all their labyrinths ; and let the  
 maid  
 Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss  
 surpris'd.  
 Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
 Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives  
 green,  
 And poplars, and lawn-shading palms,  
 and beech,  
 In which the zephyr breathes the loud-  
 est song.  
 And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath  
 the shade :  
 Apollo is once more the golden theme !  
 Where was he, when the Giant of the  
 Sun  
 Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his  
 peers ?  
 Together had he left his mother fair  
 And his twin-sister sleeping in their  
 bower,

And in the morning twilight wandered forth  
Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.  
The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars  
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush  
Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle  
There was no covert, no retired cave  
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,  
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.  
He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears  
Went trickling down the golden bow he held.  
Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,  
While from beneath some cumbrous boughs hard by  
With solemn step an awful Goddess came,  
And there was purport in her looks for him,  
Which he with eager guess began to read  
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :  
" How cam'st thou over the unfooted sea ?  
Or hath that antique mien and robed form  
Mov'd in these vales invisible till now ?  
Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er  
The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced  
The rustle of those ample skirts about  
These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers  
Lift up their heads, as still the whisper pass'd. [fore,  
Goddess ! I have beheld those eyes be-  
And their eternal calm, and all that face,  
Or I have dream'd."—" Yes," said the supreme shape,  
" Thou hast dream'd of me ; and awak-  
ing up  
Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,  
Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers,  
all the vast  
Unwearied ear of the whole universe  
Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth  
Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not  
strange  
That thou shouldst weep, so gifted ?  
Tell me, youth,

What sorrow thou canst feel ; for I am sad  
When thou dost shed a tear : explain thy griefs  
To one who in this lonely isle hath been  
The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life,  
From the young day when first thy infant hand  
Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till thine arm  
Could bend that bow heroic to all times.  
Show thy heart's secret to an ancient Power  
Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones  
For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
Of loveliness new born."—Apollo then,  
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,  
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat  
Throbb'd with the syllables.—" Mne-  
mosyne !  
Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how ;  
Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest ?  
Why should I strive to show what from thy lips  
Would come no mystery ? For me, dark,  
dark,  
And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes :  
I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
Until a melancholy numbs my limbs ;  
And then upon the grass I sit, and moan,  
Like one who once had wings.—O why should I  
Feel curs'd and thwarted, when the liegeless air  
Yields to my step aspirant ? why should I  
Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet ?  
Goddess benign, point forth some unknown thing :  
Are there not other regions than this isle ?  
What are the stars ? There is the sun,  
the sun !  
And the most patient brilliance of the moon !  
And stars by thousands ! Point me out the way  
To any one particular beauteous star,  
And I will flit into it with my lyre,  
And make its silvery splendor pant with bliss.  
I have heard the cloudy thunder :  
Where is power ?

Whose hand, whose essence, what  
divinity  
Makes this alarum in the elements,  
While I here idle listen on the shore  
In fearless yet in aching ignorance?  
O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,  
That waileth every morn and eventide,  
Tell me why thus I rave, about these  
groves!  
Mute thou remainest—Mute! yet I can  
read  
A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:  
Knowledge enormous makes a God of  
me.  
Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events,  
rebellions,  
Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,  
Creations and destroyings, all at once  
Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
And deify me, as if some blithe wine  
Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,  
And so become immortal.”—Thus the  
God,  
While his enkindled eyes, with level  
glance  
Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast  
kept  
Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.  
Soon wild commotions shook him, and  
made flush  
All the immortal fairness of his limbs;  
Most like the struggle at the gate of  
death;  
Or liker still to one who should take  
leave  
Of pale immortal death, and with a  
pang  
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce  
convulse  
Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd;  
His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
Kept undulation round his eager neck.  
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At  
length  
Apollo shriek'd;—and lo! from all his  
limbs  
Celestial \* \* \* \* \*

*September, 1818—September, 1819. 1820.*

### LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

#### BALLAD

O WHAT can all thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering!  
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

O what can all thee, knight-at-arms!  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever dew,  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery's child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She look'd at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long.  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild, and manna dew,  
And sure in language strange she said—  
“I love thee true.”

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept, and sigh'd full  
sore,  
And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,  
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!  
The latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they  
all;  
They cried—“La Belle Dame sans Merci  
Hath thee in thrall!”

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam,  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke and found me here,  
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the  
lake  
And no birds sing.

*1819. May 10, 1820.*

## ON FAME

## I

FAME, like a wayward girl, will still be coy  
 To those who woo her with too slavish knees,  
 But makes surrender to some thoughtless boy,  
 And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;  
 She is a Gipsy,—will not speak to those  
 Who have not learnt to be content without her;  
 A Jilt, whose ear was never whisper'd close,  
 Who thinks they scandal her who talk about her;  
 A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,  
 Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;  
 Ye love-sick Bards! repay her scorn for scorn;  
 Ye Artists lovelorn! madmen that ye are!  
 Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,  
 Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

## II

How fever'd is the man, who cannot look  
 Upon his mortal days with temperate blood,  
 Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,  
 And robs his fair name of its maidenhood;  
 It is as if the rose should pluck herself,  
 Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,  
 As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,  
 Should darken her pure grot with muddy gloom:  
 But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,  
 For winds to kiss and grateful bees to feed,  
 And the ripe plum still wears its dim attire,  
 The undisturbed lake has crystal space;  
 Why then should man, teasing the world for grace,  
 Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?  
 1819. 1848.

## TO SLEEP

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,  
 Shutting with careful fingers and benign,  
 Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the light,  
 Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:  
 O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee,  
 close,  
 In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,  
 Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
 Around my bed its lulling charities;  
 Then save me, or the passed day will shine  
 Upon my pillow, breeding many woes,—  
 Save me from curious conscience, that still lords  
 Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a mole;  
 Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,  
 And seal the hushed casket of my soul.  
 1819. 1848.

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE  
STEADFAST AS THOU ART

BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as thou art—  
 Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,  
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
 Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,  
 The moving waters at their priestlike task  
 Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
 Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
 Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—  
 No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,  
 Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
 To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,  
 Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
 Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
 And so live ever—or else swoon to death.  
 September, 1820. February, 1840.

# LANDOR

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## LANDOR

## GEBIR

## BOOK I

THE INVASION. THE MEETING OF GEBIR  
AND CHAROBA. THE LOVES OF TA-  
MAR AND THE SEA-NYMPH. THE SEA-  
SHELL. THE WRESTLING-MATCH.

I SING the fates of Gebir. He had  
dwelt  
Among those mountain-caverns which  
retain  
His labors yet, vast halls and flowing  
wells,  
Nor have forgotten their old master's  
name  
Though sever'd from his people: here,  
incensed  
By meditating on primeval wrongs,  
He blew his battle-horn, at which uprose  
Whole nations; here, ten thousand of  
most might  
He call'd aloud; and soon Charoba saw  
His dark helm hover o'er the land of  
Nile.

What should the virgin do? should  
royal knees  
Bend suppliant? or defenceless hands  
engage  
Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms?  
For 'twas reported that nor sword suf-  
ficed,

Nor shield immense nor coat of massive  
mail,  
But that upon their towering heads they  
bore  
Each a huge stone, refulgent as the stars.  
This told she Dalica, then cried aloud,  
"If on your bosom laying down my head  
I sobb'd away the sorrows of a child,  
If I have always, and Heav'n knows I  
have,  
Next to a mother's held a nurse's name,  
Succor this one distress, recall those  
days,  
Love me, tho' 'twere because you lov'd  
me then."  
But whether confident in magic rites  
Or touched with sexual pride to stand  
implor'd,  
Dalica smiled, then spake: "Away  
those fears,  
Though stronger than the strongest of  
his kind,  
He falls; on me devolve that charge;  
he falls.  
Rather than fly him, stoop thou to al-  
lure;  
Nay, journey to his tents. A city stood  
Upon that coast, they say, by Sidad  
built, [ground  
Whose father Gad built Gadir; on this  
Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.  
Persuade him to restore the walls him-  
self

In honor of his ancestors, persuade . . .  
But wherefore this advice? young, un-  
espoused,

Charoba want persuasions! and a  
queen!"

"O Dalica!" the shuddering maid  
exclaim'd,

"Could I encounter that fierce frightful  
man?"

Could I speak? no, nor sigh." "And  
canst thou reign?"

Cried Dalica; "Yield empire or com-  
ply."

Unfixed, though seeming fixed, her  
eyes downcast,

The wonted buzz and bustle of the court  
From far through sculptured galleries  
met her ear;

Then lifting up her head, the evening  
sun

Pour'd a fresh splendor on her burnished  
throne:

The fair Charoba, the young queen, com-  
plied.

But Gebir, when he heard of her ap-  
proach,

Laid by his orbed shield; his vizor-helm,  
His buckler and his corslet he laid by.

And bade that none attend him: at his  
side

Two faithful dogs that urge the silent  
course,

Shaggy, deep-chested, crouched; the  
crocodile,

Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid  
ears

And push their heads within their mas-  
ter's hand.

There was a brightening paleness in his  
face,

Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks  
Shower'd on the lonely Latmian; on his  
brow

Sorrow there was, yet nought was there  
severe.

But when the royal damsel first he saw,  
Faint, hanging on her handmaids, and  
her knees

Tottering, as from the motion of the  
car,

His eyes looked earnest on her, and  
those eyes

Show'd, if they had not, that they might  
have, lov'd,

For there was pity in them at that hour.  
With gentle speech, and more with  
gentle looks,

He sooth'd her; but lest Pity go beyond  
And crost Ambition lose her lofty aim

Bending, he kissed her garment, and  
retired.

He went, nor slumber'd in the sultry  
noon,

When viands, couches, generous wines,  
persuade,

And slumber most refreshes; nor at night,  
When heavy dews are laden with disease;

And blindness waits not there for linger-  
ing age.

Ere morning dawn'd behind him, he  
arrived

At those rich meadows where young  
Tamar fed

The royal flocks entrusted to his care.

"Now," said he to himself, "will I repose  
At least this burthen on a brother's  
breast."

His brother stood before him: he, amazed,  
Rear'd suddenly his head, and thus began.

"Is it thou, brother! Tamar, is it thou!  
Why, standing on the valley's utmost  
verge,

Lookest thou on that dull and dreary  
shore

Where beyond sight Nile blackens all  
the sand?

And why that sadness? When I past our  
sheep

The dew-drops were not shaken off the  
bar,

Therefore if one be wanting, 'tis untold."

"Yes, one is wanting, nor is that  
untold,"

Said Tamar; "and this dull and dreary  
shore

Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."  
Whereon the tear stole silent down his  
cheek,

Silent, but not by Gebir unobserv'd:  
Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying  
spake.

"Let me approach thee; does the morn-  
ing light

Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,  
This faint blue lustre under both thine  
eyes?"

"O brother, is this pity or reproach?"  
Cried Tamar, "cruel if it be reproach,

If pity. O how vain!" "Whatever it be  
That grieves thee, I will pity, thou but  
speak,

And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for  
pang."

"Gebir! then more than brothers are  
we now!

Everything (take my hand) will I confess.  
I neither feed the flock nor watch the  
fold;

How can I, lost in love? But, Gebir, why  
That anger which has risen to your  
cheek?

Can other men? could you? what, no  
reply!

And still more anger, and still worse  
conceal'd!

Are these your promises? your pity  
this?

"Tamar, I well may pity what I feel—  
Mark me aright—I feel for thee—  
proceed—

Relate me all." "Then will I all relate,"  
Said the young shepherd, gladden'd  
from his heart.

"'Twas evening, though not sunset, and  
the tide

Level with these green meadows, seem'd  
yet higher:

"'Twas pleasant; and I loosen'd from my  
neck

The pipe you gave me, and began to play.  
O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art!  
It always brings us enemies or love.

Well, I was playing, when above the  
waves

Some swimmer's head methought I saw  
ascend;

I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe  
Awkwardly held before my lips half-  
closed,

Gebir! it was a Nymph! a Nymph  
divine!

I cannot wait describing how she came,  
How I was sitting, how she first assum'd  
The sailor; of what happen'd there re-  
mains

Enough to say, and too much to forget.  
The sweet deceiver stepped upon this  
bank

Before I was aware; for with surprise  
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.

Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd  
reed,

I heard a rustling, and where that arose  
My glance first lighted on her nimble  
feet.

Her feet resembled those long shells  
explored

By him who to befriend his steed's dim  
sight

Would blow the pungent powder in the  
eye.

Her eyes too! O immortal Gods! her  
eyes

Resembled—what could they resemble?  
what

Ever resemble those? Even her attire  
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art:

Her mantle show'd the yellow samphire-  
pod,

Her girdle the dove-color'd wave serene.  
"Shepherd," said she, "and will you  
wrestle now,

And with the sailor's hardier race en-  
gage?"

I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived  
How to keep up contention: could I fail  
By pressing not too strongly, yet to  
press?

"Whether a shepherd, as indeed you  
seem,

Or whether of the hardier race you boast,  
I am not daunted; no; I will engage."

"But first," said she, "what wager will  
you lay?"

"A sheep," I answered: "add whate'er  
you will."

"I can not," she replied, "make that  
return:

Our hid'd vessels in their pitchy round  
Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep,  
But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue  
Within, and they that lustre have im-  
bibed

In the sun's palace-porch, where when  
unyoked

His chariot-wheel stands midway in the  
wave:

Shake one and it awakens, then apply  
Its polish'd lips to your attentive ear,  
And it remembers its august abodes,  
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs  
there.

And I have others given me by the  
nymphs,

Of sweeter sound than any pipe you  
have;

But we, by Neptune! for no pipe con-  
tend,

This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next."  
Now came she forward eager to engage,

But first her dress, her bosom then sur-  
vey'd,

And heav'd it, doubting if she could  
deceive.

Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like  
heav'n,

To baffle touch, and rose forth unde-  
fin'd:

Above her knee she drew the robe suc-  
cinct,

Above her breast, and just below her  
arms.

"This will preserve my breath when  
tightly bound,

If struggle and equal strength should so  
constrain."



Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,  
 And, rushing at me, closed: I thrill'd  
 throughout  
 And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with  
 cold.  
 Again with violent impulse gushed my  
 blood,  
 And hearing nought external, thus ab-  
 sorb'd,  
 I heard it, rushing through each turbid  
 vein,  
 Shake my unsteady swimming sight in  
 air.  
 Yet with unyielding though uncertain  
 arms  
 I clung around her neck; the vest be-  
 neath  
 Rustled against our slippery limbs en-  
 twined:  
 Often mine springing with eluded force  
 Started aside and trembled till replaced:  
 And when I most succeeded, as I thought,  
 My bosom and my throat felt so com-  
 pressed  
 That life was almost quivering on my  
 lips,  
 Yet nothing was there painful: these  
 are signs  
 Of secret arts and not of human might;  
 What arts I cannot tell; I only know  
 My eyes grew dizzy and my strength  
 decay'd;  
 I was indeed o'ercome . . . with what  
 regret,  
 And more, with what confusion, when  
 I reached  
 The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she  
 cried,  
 "This pays a shepherd to a conquering  
 maid."  
 She smiled, and more of pleasure than  
 disdain  
 Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,  
 And eyes that languished, lengthening,  
 just like love.  
 She went away; I on the wicker gate  
 Leant, and could follow with my eyes  
 alone.  
 The sheep she carried easy as a cloak;  
 But when I heard its bleating, as I did,  
 And saw, she hastening on, its hinder  
 feet [slip,  
 Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder  
 One shoulder its poor efforts had un-  
 veil'd, [tears;  
 Then all my passions mingling fell in  
 Restless then ran I to the highest ground  
 To watch her; she was gone; gone down  
 the tide;

And the long moonbeam on the hard  
 wet sand

Lay like a jasper column half up-rear'd."

"But, Tamar! tell me, will she not  
 return?"

"She will return, yet not before the  
 moon

Again is at the full: she promised this,  
 Tho' when she promised I could not  
 reply."

"By all the Gods I pity thee! go on,  
 Fear not my anger, look not on my  
 shame,

For when a lover only hears of love  
 He finds his folly out, and is ashamed.

Away with watchful nights and lonely  
 days,

Contempt of earth and aspect up to  
 heaven,

With contemplation, with humility,  
 A tatter'd cloak that pride wears when  
 deform'd,

Away with all that hides me from my-  
 self,

Parts me from others, whispers I am  
 wise:

From our own wisdom less is to be reap'd  
 Than from the barest folly of our friend.

Tamar! thy pastures, large and rich,  
 afford

Flowers to thy bees and herbage to thy  
 sheep,

But, batten'd on too much, the poorest  
 croft

Of thy poor neighbor yields what thine  
 denies."

They hasten'd to the camp, and Gebir  
 there

Resolved his native country to forego,  
 And order'd from those ruins to the right

They forthwith raise a city. Tamar  
 heard [told,

With wonder, tho' in passing 'twas half-  
 His brother's love, and sigh'd upon his

own. 1798.<sup>1</sup>

#### ROSE AYLMER

AH what avails the sceptred race,

Ah what the form divine!

What every virtue, every grace!

Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

<sup>1</sup> The exact dates of writing, for nearly all of Landor's poems, are unknown; and the same is true for Browning, and, on the whole, for all of the following poets. From this point on, therefore, the poems of each author will be arranged chronologically according to the dates of publication, and the dates of writing (if known) will be given only when especially important.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
May weep, but never see,  
A night of memories and of sighs  
I consecrate to thee.<sup>1</sup> 1806.

REGENERATION <sup>2</sup>

WE are what suns and winds and waters  
make us; [the rills  
The mountains are our sponsors, and  
Fashion and win their nursling with  
their smiles.

But where the land is dim from tyranny,  
There tiny pleasures occupy the place  
Of glories and of duties; as the feet  
Of fabled fairies when the sun goes down  
Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers  
strove by day. [above,

Then Justice, call'd the Eternal One  
Is more inconstant than the buoyant form  
That burst into existence from the froth  
Of ever-varying ocean: what is best  
Then becomes worst; what loveliest,  
most deformed.

The heart is hardest in the softest climes,  
The passions flourish, the affections die.  
O thou vast tablet of these awful truths,  
That fillest all the space between the seas,  
Spreading from Venice's deserted courts  
To the Tarentine and Hydruntine mole.  
What lifts thee up? what shakes thee?  
'tis the breath [life!

Of God. Awake, ye nations! spring to  
Let the last work of his right hand appear  
Fresh with his image, Man. Thou  
recreant slave

That sittest afar off and helpest not,  
O thou degenerate Albion! <sup>3</sup> with what  
shame

<sup>1</sup> Rose Aylmer, the daughter of Henry, fourth Baron Aylmer, was Landor's companion in his walk about Swansea ("Abertawy") in Wales. She went to India, and died there in 1800. Landor speaks of her again in two poems written late in life: *The Three Roses*, 1858, (see page 457); and *Abertawy*, 1839, the concluding lines of which almost equal in beauty this early lyric, usually considered the most beautiful of his poems:

Where is she now? Call'd far away,  
By one she dared not disobey,  
To those proud halls, for youth unfit,  
Where princes stand and judges sit.  
Where Ganges rolls his widest wave  
She dropped her blossom in the grave;  
Her noble name she never changed,  
Nor was her nobler heart estranged.

<sup>2</sup> Inspired by the struggle of the Greek people for independence.

<sup>3</sup> "What those amongst us who are affected by a sense of national honor most lament, is, that England, whose generosity would cost her nothing, and whose courage would be unexposed to fatality, stands aloof." (Landor, in the *Dedication of Imaginary Conversations*, 1829.)

Do I survey thee, pushing forth the  
sponge  
At thy spear's length, in mockery at the  
thirst  
Of holy Freedom in his agony.  
And prompt and keen to pierce the  
wounded side!

Must Italy then wholly rot away  
Amid her slime, before she germinate  
Into fresh vigor, into form again?

What thunder bursts upon mine ear!  
some isle

Hath surely risen from the gulfs pro-  
found,

Eager to suck the sunshine from the  
breast

Of beauteous Nature, and to catch the  
gale

From golden Hermus and Melena's brow.  
A greater thing than isle, than continent,  
Than earth itself, than ocean circling  
earth,

Hath risen there; regenerate Man hath  
risen.

Generous old bard of Chios! not that Jove  
Deprived thee in thy latter days of sight  
Would I complain, but that no higher  
theme

Than a disdainful youth, a lawless king,  
A pestilence, a pyre, awoke thy song,  
When on the Chian coast, one javelin's  
throw

From where thy tombstone, where thy  
cradle, stood,

Twice twenty self-devoted Greeks as-  
sail'd

The naval host of Asia, at one blow <sup>1</sup>  
Scattered it into air . . . and Greece  
was free . . .

And ere these glories beam'd, thy day  
had closed.

Let all that Elis ever saw, give way,  
All that Olympian Jove e'er smiled  
upon:

The Marathonian columns never told  
A tale more glorious, never Salamis,  
Nor, faithful in the centre of the false,  
Platea, nor Anthela, from whose mount  
Benignant Ceres wards the blessed Laws,  
And sees the Amphictyon dip his weary  
foot

In the warm streamlet of the strait be-  
low.

Goddess! altho' thy brow was never  
rear'd [sail'd

Among the powers that guarded or as-

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the victory of Canaris over the Turkish fleet. Compare the poem of Victor Hugo on the same battle, in *Les Orientales*.

Perfidious Iliou, parricidal Thebes,  
 Or other walls whose war-belt e'er in-  
 closed  
 Man's congregated crimes and vengeful  
 pain,  
 Yet hast thou touched the extremes of  
 grief and joy;  
 Grief upon Enna's mead and Hell's as-  
 cent,  
 A solitary mother; joy beyond,  
 Far beyond, that thy woe, in this thy  
 fane:  
 The tears were human, but the bliss  
 divine.  
 I, in the land of strangers, and depressed  
 With sad and certain presage for my  
 own,  
 Exult at hope's fresh dayspring, tho'  
 afar,  
 There where my youth was not unexer-  
 cised  
 By chiefs in willing war and faithful  
 song:  
 Shades as they were, they were not  
 empty shades,  
 Whose bodies haunt our world and bear  
 our sun,  
 Obstruction worse than swamp and  
 shapeless sands.  
 Peace, praise, eternal gladness, to the  
 souls  
 That, rising from the seas into the  
 heavens,  
 Have ransom'd first their country with  
 their blood!  
 O thou immortal Spartan! at whose  
 name  
 The marble table sounds beneath my  
 palms,  
 Leonidas! even thou wilt not disdain  
 To mingle names august as these with  
 thine;  
 Nor thou, twin-star of glory, thou whose  
 rays  
 Stream'd over Corinth on the double  
 sea,  
 Achaian and Saronic; whom the sons  
 Of Syracuse, when Death removed thy  
 light,  
 Wept more than slavery ever made them  
 weep,  
 But shed (if gratitude is sweet) sweet  
 tears.  
 The hand that then pour'd ashes o'er  
 their heads  
 Was loosen'd from its desperate chain  
 by thee.  
 What now can press mankind into one  
 mass,

For Tyranny to tread the more secure!  
 From gold alone is drawn the guilty  
 wire [tone  
 That Adulation trills: she mocks the  
 Of Duty, Courage, Virtue, Piety,  
 And under her sits Hope. O how unlike  
 That graceful form in azure vest array'd,  
 With brow serene, and eyes on heaven  
 alone  
 In patience fixed, in fondness unob-  
 soured!  
 What monsters coil beneath the spread-  
 ing tree  
 Of Despotism! what wastes extend  
 around!  
 What poison floats upon the distant  
 breeze!  
 But who are those that cull and deal its  
 fruit?  
 Creatures that shun the light and fear  
 the shade,  
 Bloated and fierce, Sleep's mien and  
 Famine's cry.  
 Rise up again, rise in thy dignity,  
 Dejected Man! and scare this brood  
 away. 1834.

#### CHILD OF A DAY, THOU KNOWEST NOT

CHILD of a day, thou knowest not  
 The tears that overflow thine urn,  
 The gushing eyes that read thy lot,  
 Nor, if thou knewest, couldst return!  
 And why the wish! the pure and blessed  
 Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.  
 O peaceful night! O envied rest!  
 Thou wilt not ever see her weep. 1831.

#### LYRICS, TO IANTHE

AWAY my verse; and never fear,  
 As men before such beauty do;  
 On you she will not look severe,  
 She will not turn her eyes from you.  
 Some happier graces could I lend  
 That in her memory you should live,  
 Some little blemishes might blend,  
 For it would please her to forgive.

When Helen first saw wrinkles in her  
 face  
 ('Twas when some fifty long had settled  
 there  
 And intermarried and branched off  
 awide)

She threw herself upon her couch and wept:  
On this side hung her head, and over that  
Listlessly she let fall the faithless brass  
That made the men as faithless.

But when you Found them, or fancied them, and would not hear  
That they were only vestiges of smiles,  
Or the impression of some amorous hair  
Astray from cloistered curls and roseate band,  
Which had been lying there all night  
Upon a skin so soft. "No, no," you said,  
"Sure, they are coming, yes, are come, are here:  
Well, and what matters it, while thou art too!"

Lanthe! you are call'd to cross the sea!  
A path forbidden *me*!  
Remember, while the Sun his blessing sheds  
Upon the mountain-heads,  
How often we have watched him laying down  
His brow, and dropped our own  
Against each other's, and how faint and short  
And sliding the support!  
What will succeed it now? Mine is unblest,  
Lanthe! nor will rest  
But on the very thought that swells with pain.  
O bid me hope again!  
O give me back what Earth, what (without you)  
Not Heaven itself can do,  
One of the golden days that we have past;  
And let it be my last!  
Or else the gift would be, however sweet,  
Fragile and incomplete.

I held her hand, the pledge of bliss,  
Her hand that trembled and withdrew;  
She bent her head before my kiss . . .  
My heart was sure that hers was true.

Now I have told her I must part,  
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,  
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart!  
Hers never was the heart for you.

Pleasure! why thus desert the heart  
In its spring-tide?  
I could have seen her, I could part,  
And but have sigh'd!

O'er every youthful charm to stray,  
To gaze, to touch . . .  
Pleasure! why take so much away,  
Or give so much!

Mild is the parting year, and sweet  
The odor of the falling spray;  
Life passes on more rudely fleet,  
And balmless is its closing day.

I wait its close. I court its gloom,  
But mourn that never must there fall  
Or on my breast or on my tomb  
The tear that would have sooth'd it all.

Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives,  
Alcestis rises from the shades;  
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives  
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil  
Hide all the peopled hills you see,  
The gay, the proud, while lovers hail  
These many summers you and me.  
1831.

#### FIESOLAN IDYL

HERE, where precipitate Spring, with  
one light bound  
Into hot Summer's lusty arms, expires,  
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at  
night,  
Soft airs that want the lute to play with  
'em,  
And softer sighs that know not what  
they want,  
Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,  
Whose tallest flowers could tell the low-  
lier ones  
Of sights in Fiesolè right up above,  
While I was gazing a few paces off  
At what they seem'd to show me with  
their nods,  
Their frequent whispers and their point-  
ing shoots,  
A gentle maid came down the garden-  
steps [lap.  
And gathered the pure treasure in her

I heard the branches rustle, and stepped forth  
 To drive the ox away, or mule or goat,  
 Such I believed it must be. How could I  
 Let beast o'erpower them? When hath  
 wind or rain  
 Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted  
 me,  
 And I (however they might bluster  
 round)  
 Walked off? 'Twere most ungrateful:  
 for sweet scents  
 Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter  
 thoughts,  
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory  
 That would let drop without them her  
 best stores.  
 They bring me tales of youth and tones  
 of love.  
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way  
 To let all flowers live freely, and all die  
 (Whene'er their Genius bids their souls  
 depart)  
 Among their kindred in their native  
 place.  
 I never pluck the rose; the violet's head  
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its  
 bank  
 And not reproached me: the ever-sacred  
 cup  
 Of the pure lily hath between my hands  
 Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of  
 gold.  
 I saw the light that made the glossy  
 leaves  
 More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer  
 cheek  
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit;  
 I saw the foot that, altho' half-erect  
 From its gray slipper, could not lift her  
 up  
 To what she wanted: I held down a  
 branch  
 And gather'd her some blossoms; since  
 their hour  
 Was come, and bees had wounded them,  
 and flies  
 Of harder wing were working their way  
 thro'  
 And scattering them in fragments under-  
 foot.  
 So crisp were some, they rattled un-  
 evolved,  
 Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,  
 For such appear the petals when de-  
 tached  
 Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like  
 snow, [sun:  
 And like snow not seen thro', by eye or

Yet every one her gown received from  
 me  
 Was fairer than the first. I thought not  
 so,  
 But so she praised them to reward my  
 care.  
 I said, "You find the largest."  
 "This indeed,"  
 Cried she, "is large and sweet." She  
 held one forth,  
 Whether for me to look at or to take  
 She knew not, nor did I; but taking it  
 Would best have solved (and this she  
 felt) her doubt.  
 I dared not touch it; for it seemed a  
 part  
 Of her own self; fresh, full, the most  
 mature  
 Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch  
 To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back  
 The boon she tender'd, and then, finding  
 not  
 The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,  
 Dropped it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.  
 1831.

#### FOR AN EPITAPH AT FIESOLE

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their  
 shade  
 In calm repose at last is Landor laid,  
 For ere he slept he saw them planted  
 here  
 By her his soul had ever held most dear,  
 And he had lived enough when he had  
 dried her tear. 1831.

#### UPON A SWEET-BRIAR

My briar that smelledst sweet  
 When gentle spring's first heat  
 Ran through thy quiet veins,—  
 Thou that wouldst injure none,  
 But wouldst be left alone,  
 Alone thou leavest me, and nought of  
 thine remains.

What! hath no poet's lyre  
 O'er thee, sweet-breathing briar,  
 Hung fondly, ill or well?  
 And yet methinks with thee  
 A poet's sympathy,  
 Whether in weal or woe, in life or death,  
 might dwell.

Hard usage both must bear,  
 Few hands your youth will rear,  
 Few bosoms cherish you;  
 Your tender prime must bleed

Ere you are sweet, but freed  
From life, you then are prized; thus  
prized are poets too.

.....

And art thou yet alive?  
And shall the happy hive  
Send out her youth to cull  
Thy sweets of leaf and flower,  
And spend the sunny hour  
With thee, and thy faint heart with  
murmuring music lull?

Tell me what tender care,  
Tell me what pious prayer,  
Bade thee arise and live.  
The fondest-favored bee  
Shall whisper nought to thee  
Move loving than the song my grateful  
muse shall give.

1834.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE MAID'S LAMENT

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is gone  
I feel I am alone.  
I check'd him while he spoke; yet could  
he speak,  
Alas! I would not check.  
For reasons not to love him once I  
sought,  
And wearied all my thought  
To vex myself and him: I now would  
give  
My love, could he but live  
Who lately lived for me, and when he  
found  
'Twas vain, in holy ground  
He hid his face amid the shades of  
death.  
I waste for him my breath  
Who wasted his for me: but mine re-  
turns,  
And this lorn bosom burns  
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,  
And waking me to weep  
Tears that had melted his soft heart:  
for years  
Wept he as bitter tears.  
*Merciful God!* such was his latest  
prayer,  
*These may she never share.*  
Quieter is his breath, his breast more  
cold,  
Than daisies in the mould,  
Where children spell, athwart the  
churchyard gate,

<sup>1</sup> This and the following poem are from the  
*Citation of William Shakespeare.*

His name and life's brief date.  
Pray for him, gentle souls, whose'er you  
be,  
And oh! pray too for me.

1834.

#### THE SHADES OF AGAMEMNON AND IPHIGENEIA<sup>1</sup>

*Iphigeneia.* Father! I now may lean  
upon your breast,  
And you with unreverted eyes will grasp  
*Iphigeneia's* hand.

We are not shades  
Surely! for yours throb yet.

And did my blood  
Win Troy for Greece?

Ah! 'twas ill done, to shrink;  
But the sword gleam'd so sharp; and the  
good priest

Trembled, and Pallas frown'd above,  
severe.

*Agamemnon.* Daughter!

*Iphigeneia.* Beloved father! is the  
blade

Again to pierce my bosom? 'tis unfit  
For sacrifice; no blood is in its veins,  
No God requires it here: here are no  
wrongs

To vindicate, no realms to overthrow.  
You standing as at Aulis in the fane,  
With face averted, holding (as before)  
My hand; but yours burns not, as then  
it burn'd.

This alone shows me we are with the  
Blessed,  
Nor subject to the sufferings we have  
borne.

I will win back past kindness.

Tell me then,  
Tell how my mother fares who loved me  
so,

And griev'd, as 'twere for you, to see me  
part.

Frown not, but pardon me for tarrying  
Amid too idle words, nor asking how  
She prais'd us both (which most?) for  
what we did.

*Agamemnon.* Ye Gods who govern  
here! do human pangs

Reach the pure soul thus far below? do  
tears

Spring in these meadows?

<sup>1</sup> "I imagine Agamemnon to descend from his  
horrible death, and to meet instantly his daugh-  
ter. By the nature of things, by the suddenness  
of the event, *Iphigeneia* can have heard nothing  
of her mother's double crime, adultery and  
murder." *Aspasia* to Cleone, introducing the  
poem as first given in *Pericles and Aspasia*, 1836.

*Iphigeneia.* No, sweet father, no . .  
I could have answered that ; why ask  
the Gods ?

*Agamemnon.* Iphigeneia ! O my  
child ! the Earth  
Has gendered crimes unheard of heretofore,  
And Nature may have changed in her  
last depths,  
Together with the Gods and all their  
laws.

*Iphigeneia.* Father ! we must not let  
you here condemn ;  
Not, were the day less joyful : recollect  
We have no wicked here ; no king to  
judge.

Poseidon, we have heard, with bitter  
rage  
Lashes his foaming steeds against the  
skies,  
And, laughing with loud yell at winged  
fire,  
Innoxious to his fields and palaces  
Affrights the eagle from the sceptred  
hand ;

While Pluto, gentlest brother of the  
three  
And happiest in obedience, views sedate  
His tranquil realm, nor envies theirs  
above.

No change have we, not even day for  
night  
Nor spring for summer.

All things are serene.  
Serene too be your spirit ! None on earth  
Ever was half so kindly in his house,  
And so compliant, even to a child.  
Never was snatch'd your robe away from  
me, [man  
Though going to the council. The blind  
Knew his good king was leading him  
indoors,  
Before he heard the voice that marshal'd  
Greece.

Therefore all prais'd you.

Proudest men themselves  
In others praise humility, and most  
Admire it in the sceptre and the sword.  
What then can make you speak thus  
rapidly

And briefly ? in your step thus hesitate ?  
Are you afraid to meet among the good  
Incestuous Helen here ?

*Agamemnon.* O ! gods of hell !  
*Iphigeneia.* She hath not past the  
river.

We may walk  
With our hands link'd nor feel our  
house's shame.

*Agamemnon.* Never mayst thou, Iphi-  
geneia, feel it !  
Aulis had no sharp sword, thou wouldst  
exclaim,

Greece no avenger—I, her chief so late,  
Through Erebos, through Elysium,  
writhe beneath it.

*Iphigeneia.* Come, I have better dia-  
dems than those  
Of Argos and Mycenai : come away,  
And I will weave them for you on the  
bank.

You will not look so pale when you have  
walk'd

A little in the grove, and have told all  
Those sweet fond words the widow sent  
her child.

*Agamemnon.* O Earth ! I suffered  
less upon thy shores !

(*Aside.*) The bath that bubbled with  
my blood, the blows

That spilt it (O worse torture !) must  
she know ?

Ah ! the first woman coming from My-  
cenai

Will pine to pour this poison in her ear,  
Taunting sad Charon for his slow ad-  
vance.

*Iphigeneia !*

*Iphigeneia.* Why thus turn away ?  
Calling me with such fondness ! I am  
here.

Father ! and where you are, will ever be.

*Agamemnon.* Thou art my child : yes,  
yes, thou art my child.

All was not once what all now is ! Come  
on,

Idol of love and truth ! my child ! my  
child !

(*Alone.*) Fell woman ! ever false !  
false was thy last

Denunciation, as thy bridal vow ;  
And yet even that found faith with me !

The dirk  
Which sever'd flesh from flesh, where  
this hand rests,

Severs not, as thou boastedst in thy  
scoffs,

Iphigeneia's love from Agamemnon :

The wife's a spark may light, a straw  
consume.

The daughter's not her heart's whole  
fount hath quench'd,

'Tis worthy of the Gods, and lives for  
ever.

*Iphigeneia.* What spake my father  
to the Gods above ?

Unworthy am I then to join in prayer ?  
If, on the last, or any day before,

Of my brief course on earth. I did amiss,  
Say it at once, and let me be unblessed ;  
But, O my faultless father ! why should  
you ?

And shun so my embraces ?

Am I wild  
And wandering in my fondness ?

We are shades !  
Groan not thus deeply ; blight not thus  
the season

Of full-orb'd gladness ! Shades we are  
indeed,  
But mingled, let us feel it, with the  
blessed.

I knew it, but forgot it suddenly,  
Altho' I felt it all at your approach.

Look on me ; smile with me at my  
illusion.

You are so like what you have ever been  
(Except in sorrow !) I might well forget  
I could not win you as I used to do.

It was the first embrace since my de-  
scent

I ever aim'd at : those who love me live,  
Save one, who loves me most, and now  
would chide me.

Agamemnon. We want not, O Iphi-  
geneia, we

Want not embrace, nor kiss that cools  
the heart [more

With purity, nor words that more and  
Teach what we know, from those we  
know, and sink

Often most deeply where they fall most  
light.

Time was when for the faintest breath  
of thine

Kingdom and life were little,  
Iphigeneia. Value them

As little now.

Agamemnon. Were life and kingdom  
all !

Iphigeneia. Ah ! by our death many  
are sad who loved us.

The little fond Electra, and Orestes  
So childish and so bold ! O that mad  
boy !

They will be happy too.

Cheer ! king of men !  
Cheer ! there are voices, songs—Cheer !  
arms advance.

Agamemnon. Come to me, soul of  
peace ! These, these alone,

These are not false embraces.

Iphigeneia. Both are happy !

Agamemnon. Freshness breathes  
round me from some breeze above.

What are ye, winged ones ! with golden  
urns ?

### The Hours

(Descending.) To each an urn we bring :  
Earth's purest gold  
Alone can hold

The lymph of the Lethean spring.  
We, son of Atreus ! we divide  
The dulcet from the bitter tide  
That runs athwart the paths of  
men.

No more our pinions shalt thou see.  
Take comfort ! We have done with  
thee,

And must away to earth again.

(Ascending.) Where thou art, thou

Of braided brow,

Thou cull'd too soon from Argive bowers,  
Where thy sweet voice is heard among  
The shades that thrill with choral song,  
None can regret the parted Hours.

(As the Hours depart, the shades of the Argive  
warriors who had fought at Troy approach and  
chant in chorus the praises of Agamemnon and  
his daughter.)

### Chorus of Argives

Maiden ! be thou the spirit that breathes  
Triumph and joy into our song !

Wear and bestow these amaranth-  
wreaths,

Iphigeneia—they belong  
To none but thee and her who reigns  
(Less chanted) on our bosky plains.

### Semi-chorus

Iphigeneia ! 'tis to thee

Glory we owe and victory.

Clash, men of Argos, clash your  
arms.

To martial worth and virgin charms.

### Other Semi-chorus

Ye men of Argos ! it was sweet  
To roll the fruits of conquest at the feet  
Whose whispering sound made bravest  
hearts beat fast.

This we have known at home ;

But hither we are come

To crown the king who ruled us first  
and last.

### Chorus

Father of Argos ! king of men !

We chant the hymn of praise to  
thee.

In serried ranks we stand again.

Our glory safe, our country free.



Clash, clash the arms we bravely bore  
Against Scamander's God-defended shore.

*Semi-chorus*

Blessed art thou who hast repell'd  
Battle's wild fury, Ocean's whelming foam ;  
Blessed o'er all, to have beheld  
Wife, children, house avenged, and peaceful home !

*Other Semi-chorus*

We, too, thou seest, are now  
Among the happy, though the aged brow  
From sorrow for us we could not protect,  
Nor, on the polished granite of the well  
Folding our arms, of spoils and perils tell,  
Nor lift the vase on the lov'd head erect.

*Semi-chorus*

What whirling wheels are those behind ?  
What plumes come flaring through the wind,  
Nearer and nearer ? From his car  
He who defied the heaven-born Powers of war  
Pelides springs ! Dust, dust are we  
To him, O king, who bends the knee,  
Proud only to be first in reverent praise of thee.

*Other Semi-Chorus*

Clash, clash the arms ! None other race  
Shall see such heroes face to face.  
We too have fought ; and they have seen  
Nor sea-sand gray nor meadow green  
Where Dardans stood against their men.  
Clash ! Io Paean ! clash again !  
Repinings for lost days repress.  
The flames of Troy had cheer'd us less.

*Chorus*

Hark ! from afar more war-steeds neigh,  
Thousands o'er thousands rush this way.  
Ajax is yonder ! ay, behold  
The radiant arms of Lycian gold !  
Arms from admiring valor won,

Tydeus ! and worthy of thy son.  
'Tis Ajax wears them now ; for he  
Rules over Adria's stormy sea.

He threw them to the friend who lost  
(By the dim judgment of the host)  
Those wet with tears which Thetis gave  
The youth most beauteous of the brave.  
In vain ! the insatiate soul would go  
For comfort to his peers below.  
Clash ! ere we leave them all the plain,  
Clash ! Io Paean ! once again.<sup>1</sup> 1836.

THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA :

" ARTEMIDORA ! Gods invisible,  
While thou art lying faint along the couch,  
Have tied the sandal to thy slender feet  
And stand beside thee, ready to convey  
Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.  
Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness

Away, and voices like thy own come near  
And nearer, and solicit an embrace."

Artemidora sigh'd, and would have pressed  
The hand now pressing hers, but was too weak.

Iris stood over her dark hair unseen  
While thus Elpenor spake. He looked into  
Eyes that had given light and life ere-while

To those above them, but now dim with tears

And wakefulness. Again he spake of joy  
Eternal. At that word, that sad word,  
joy.

Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once more :

Her head fell back ; and now a loud deep sob

Swell'd thro' the darken'd chamber ;  
'twas not hers. 1836.

CORINNA TO TANAGRA, FROM  
ATHENS

TANAGRA ! think not I forget  
Thy beautifully storied streets ;  
Be sure my memory bathes yet  
In clear Thermodon, and yet greets  
The blithe and liberal shepherd-boy,

<sup>1</sup> See Lander's own comment on this poem, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> 1836, in *Pericles and Aspasia*. Slightly altered and included in the *Hellenica*, 1846, etc., from which the present text is taken. See Colvin's comment on the poem, in his *Life of Lander*, pp. 193-4.

Whose sunny bosom swells with joy  
When we accept his matted rushes  
Upheav'd with sylvan fruit; away he  
bounds, and blushes.

A gift I promise: one I see  
Which thou with transport wilt receive,  
The only proper gift for thee,  
Of which no mortal shall bereave  
In later times thy mouldering walls,  
Until the last old turret falls;  
A crown, a crown from Athens won,  
A crown no God can wear, beside Læ-  
tœa's son.

There may be cities who refuse  
To their own child the honors due,  
And look ungently on the Muse;  
But ever shall those cities rue  
The dry, unyielding, niggard breast,  
Offering no nourishment, no rest,  
To that young head which soon shall  
rise  
Disdainfully, in might and glory, to the  
skies.

Sweetly where cavern'd Dirce flows  
Do white-arm'd maidens chant my  
lay,  
Flapping the while with laurel-rose  
The honey-gathering tribes away;  
And sweetly, sweetly Attic tongues  
Lisp your Corinna's early songs;  
To her with feet more graceful come  
The verses that have dwelt in kindred  
breasts at home.

O let thy children lean aslant  
Against the tender mother's knee,  
And gaze into her face, and want  
To know what magic there can be  
In words that urge some eyes to dance,  
While others as in holy trance  
Look up to heaven: besuch my praise!  
Why linger? I must haste, or lose the  
Delphic bays. 1836.

#### SAPPHO TO HESPERUS

I HAVE beheld thee in the morning hour  
A solitary star, with thankless eyes,  
Ungrateful as I am! who bade thee rise  
When sleepall night had wandered from  
my bower.

Can it be true that thou art he  
Who shines now above the sea  
Amid a thousand, but more bright?

Ah yes! the very same art thou  
That heard me then and hearest now...  
Thou seemest, star of love! to throb with  
light. 1836.

#### LITTLE AGLAE

TO HER FATHER, ON HER STATUE BEING  
CALLED LIKE HER

FATHER! the little girl we see  
Is not, I fancy, so like me;  
You never hold her on your knee.

When she came home, the other day,  
You kiss'd her; but I cannot say  
She kiss'd you first and ran away. 1836.

#### DIRCE

STAND close around, ye Stygian set,  
With Dirce in one boat conveyed,  
Or Charon, seeing, may forget  
That he is old, and she a shade. 1836.

#### CLEONE TO ASPASIA

WE mind not how the sun in the mid-  
sky  
Is hastening on; but when the golden  
orb  
Strikes the extreme of earth, and when  
the gulfs  
Of air and ocean open to receive him,  
Dampness and gloom invade us; then  
we think  
Ah! thus is it with Youth. Too fast his  
feet  
Run on for sight; hour follows hour;  
fair maid  
Succeeds fair maid; bright eyes bestar  
his couch;  
The cheerful horn awakens him; the  
feast.  
The revel, the entangling dance, allure,  
And voices mellow than the Muse's  
own  
Heave up his buoyant bosom on their  
wave.  
A little while, and then—Ah Youth!  
Youth! Youth!  
Listen not to my words—but stay with  
me!  
When thou art gone, Life may go too;  
the sigh  
That rises is for thee, and not for Life. 1836.

## ON LUCRETIA BORGIA'S HAIR

BORGIA, thou once wert almost too  
 august  
 And high for adoration; now thou'rt  
 dust;  
 All that remains of thee these plaits  
 unfold,  
 Calm hair meandering in pellucid gold.  
 1837.

## TO WORDSWORTH

THOSE who have laid the harp aside  
 And turn'd to idler things,  
 From very restlessness have tried  
 The loose and dusty strings,  
 And, catching back some favorite strain,  
 Run with it o'er the chords again.

But Memory is not a Muse,  
 O Wordsworth! though 'tis said  
 They all descend from her, and use  
 To haunt her fountain-head:  
 That other men should work for me  
 In the rich mines of Poesie,

Pleases me better than the toil  
 Of smoothing under hardened hand,  
 With attic emery and oil,  
 The shining point for Wisdom's wand,  
 Like those thou temperest 'mid the rills  
 Descending from thy native hills.  
 Without his governance, in vain,  
 Manhood is strong, and Youth is bold.

If oftentimes the o'er-piled strain,  
 Clogs in the furnace and grows cold  
 Beneath his pinions deep and froze.  
 And swells and melts and flows no  
 more,  
 That is because the heat beneath  
 Pants in its cavern poorly fed.  
 Life springs not from the couch of  
 Death,  
 Nor Muse nor Grace can raise the  
 dead;

Unturn'd then let the mass remain,  
 Intractable to sun or rain.

A marsh, where only flat leaves lie,  
 And showing but the broken sky,  
 Too surely is the sweetest lay  
 That wins the ear and wastes the day,  
 Where youthful Fancy pouts alone  
 And lets not Wisdom touch her zone.

He who would build his fame up high,  
 The rule and plummet must apply.  
 Nor say, "I'll do what I have plann'd,"

Before he try if loam or sand  
 Be still remaining in the place  
 Delved for each polished pillar's base.  
 With skilful eye and fit device  
 Thou raisest every edifice,  
 Whether in sheltered vale it stand,  
 Or overlook the Dardan strand,  
 Amid the cypresses that mourn  
 Laodameia's love forlorn.

We both have run o'er half the space  
 Listed for mortal's earthly race;  
 We both have crossed life's fervid line,  
 And other stars before us shine:  
 May they be bright and prosperous  
 As those that have been stars for us!  
 Our course by Milton's light was sped,  
 And Shakespeare shining overhead:  
 Chatting on deck was Dryden too,  
 The Bacon of the rhyming crew;  
 None ever cross'd our mystic sea  
 More richly stored with thought than he;  
 Tho' never tender nor sublime,  
 He wrestles with and conquers Time.  
 To learn my lore on Chaucer's knee,  
 I left much prouder company;  
 Thee gentle Spenser fondly led,  
 But me he mostly sent to bed.

I wish them every joy above  
 That highly blessed spirits prove,  
 Save one: and that too shall be theirs,  
 But after many rolling years,  
 When 'mid their light thy light appear.  
 1833. 1837.

## TO JOSEPH ABLETT

LORD of the Celtic dells,  
 Where Clwyd listens as his minstrel  
 tells  
 Of Arthur, or Pendragon, or perchance  
 The plumes of flashy France,  
 Or, in dark region far across the main,  
 Far as Grenada in the world of Spain,

Warriors untold to Saxon ear,  
 Until their steel-clad spirits reappear;  
 How happy were the hours that held  
 Thy friend (long absent from his native  
 home)  
 Amid thy scenes with thee! how wide  
 afield  
 From all past cares and all to come!

What hath Ambition's feverish grasp,  
 what hath  
 Inconstant Fortune, panting Hope;  
 What Genius, that should cope

heart-whispers in that path  
idly, where the idler stream  
the white-haired poplars  
for gleam?

! all the days  
nners ever knew,  
here have been no few,  
ot one surveys  
re spent together. Wisely  
ne that leave the soul con-

have visited the men  
ctish pirates vainly would  
rowned ;  
ever clasp the hand again  
the British harp its truest  
?  
ent's guest! and thou by  
ere's springs!  
ors of immortal things.<sup>1</sup>

thou for happier days  
en's force and Spenser's fays  
t and soul possess'd :<sup>2</sup>  
im London he who will,  
Maiano's hill,  
l with pride his sunburnt

his easy-chair  
chant awaits thee there,  
e are voices in the grove  
use, that make me think  
oming down to drink  
lne's love.

am I borne away  
o whom began my lay?  
! I am not yet quite lost ;  
de to greet my friends ;  
soon the greeting ends,  
out three or four at most.

at Time hath borne too hard  
rtunes of thy bard,  
me only three or four :  
umber ; dost thou start  
le? in what man's heart  
eside for more?

courted friends or Fame ;  
it me long, at last she came,  
her arms around my neck  
id,

1 Wordsworth. 2 Leigh Hunt.

"Take what hath been for years delay'd,  
And fear not that the leaves will fall  
One hour the earlier from thy coronal."

Ablett! thou knowest with what even  
hand  
I waved away the offer'd seat  
Among the clambering, clattering, stilt-  
ed great,  
The rulers of our land ;  
Nor crowds nor kings can lift me up,  
Nor sweeten Pleasure's purer cup.

Thou knowest how, and why, are dear  
to me  
My citron groves of Fiesole,  
My chirping Affrico, my beechwood  
nook,  
My Naiads, with feet only in the brook,  
Which runs away and giggles in their  
faces,  
Yet there they sit, nor sigh for other  
places.

'Tis not Pelasgian wall,  
By him made sacred whom alone  
'Twere not profane to call  
The bard divine, nor (thrown  
Far under me) Valdarno, nor the crest  
Of Vallombrosa in the crimson east.

Here can I sit or roam at will :  
Few trouble me, few wish me ill,  
Few come across me, few too near ;  
Here all my wishes make their stand ;  
Here ask I no one's voice or hand ;  
Scornful of favor, ignorant of fear.

Yon vine upon the maple bough  
Flouts at the hearty wheat below ;  
Away her venal wines the wise man  
sends,  
While those of lower stem he brings  
From inmost treasure vault, and sings  
Their worth and age among his chosen  
friends.

Behold our Earth, most nigh the sun  
Her zone least opens to the genial heat,  
But farther off her veins more freely  
run :  
'Tis thus with those who whirl about  
the great ; [mote  
The nearest shrink and shiver, we re-  
May open-breasted blow the pastoral oat.  
1834. 1837.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This poem had been printed in an earlier form, containing lines to Coleridge, in Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, December 3, 1834. See Colvin's *Life of Landor*, note to p. 142.

## TO MARY LAMB

COMFORT thee, O thou mourner, yet  
awhile!

Again shall Elia's smile  
Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache  
no more.

What is it we deplore?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs  
and years,

Far worthier things than tears.  
The love of friends without a single foe:  
Unequalled lot below!

His gentle soul, his genius, these are  
thine;

For these dost thou repine?

He may have left the lowly walks of  
men;

Left them he has; what then?

Are not his footsteps followed by the  
eyes

Of all the good and wise?  
Tho' the warm day is over, yet they  
seek

Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that  
glows

O'er death's perennial snows.  
Behold him! from the region of the  
blessed

He speaks: he bids thee rest.

1834. 1837.

ON HIS OWN IPHIGENEIA AND  
AGAMEMNON

From eve to morn, from morn to part-  
ing night

Father and daughter stood within my  
sight. [they said.

I felt the looks they gave, the words  
And reconducted each serener shade.

Ever shall these to me be well-spent  
days,

Sweet fell the tears upon them, sweet  
the praise. [throne,

Far from the footstool of the tragic  
I am tragedian in that scene alone.

1837.

## FAREWELL TO ITALY

I LEAVE thee, beauteous Italy! no more  
From the high terraces, at eventide,  
To look supine into thy depths of sky,  
Thy golden moon between the cliff and  
me,

Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses  
Bordering the channel of the milky-way.  
Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams  
Hereafter, and my own lost Africo  
Murmur to me but in the poet's song.  
I did believe (what have I not believed?)  
Weary with age, but unoppressed by  
pain,

To close in thy soft clime my quiet day  
And rest my bones in the Mimosa's  
shade.

Hope! Hope! few ever cherished thee  
so little;

Few are the heads thou hast so rarely  
raised; [well.

But thou didst promise this, and all was  
For we are fond of thinking where to lie  
When every pulse hath ceased, when the  
lone heart

Can lift no aspiration—reasoning  
As if the sight were unimpaired by death,  
Were unobstructed by the coffin-lid,  
And the sun cheered corruption! Over  
all

The smiles of nature shed a potent  
charm,

And light us to our chamber at the  
grave. 1835. 1846.

## WHY, WHY REPINE

WHY, why repine, my pensive friend,  
At pleasures slipped away?  
Some the stern Fates will never lend,  
And all refuse to stay.

I see the rainbow in the sky,  
The dew upon the grass.  
I see them, and I ask not why  
They glimmer or they pass.

With folded arms I linger not  
To call them back; 'twere vain;  
In this, or in some other spot,  
I know they'll shine again.

1846.

MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY  
WHEEL

MOTHER, I cannot mind my wheel;  
My fingers ache, my lips are dry:  
Oh! if you felt the pain I feel!  
But oh, who ever felt as I?  
No longer could I doubt him true—  
All other men may use deceit;  
He always said my eyes were blue,  
And often swore my lips were sweet.

1846.

## TO A BRIDE

FEBRUARY 17, 1846<sup>1</sup>

A STILL, serene, soft day ; enough of sun  
 To wreathe the cottage smoke like pine-  
 tree snow,  
 Whiter than those white flowers the  
 bride-maids wore ;  
 Upon the silent boughs the lissom air  
 Rested ; and, only when it went, they  
 moved,  
 Nor more than under linnet springing off.  
 Such was the wedding morn : the joy-  
 ous Year  
 Leapt over March and April up to May.  
 Regent of rising and of ebbing hearts,  
 Thyself borne on in cool serenity,  
 All heaven around and bending over  
 thee,  
 All earth below and watchful of thy  
 course !  
 Well hast thou chosen, after long demur  
 To aspirations from more realms than  
 one.  
 Peace be with those thou leavest ! peace  
 with thee !  
 Is that enough to wish thee ? not enough,  
 But very much : for Love himself feels  
 pain,  
 While brighter plumage shoots, to shed  
 last year's ;  
 And one at home (how dear that one !)  
 recalls  
 Thy name, and thou recallest one at  
 home.  
 Yet turn not back thine eyes ; the hour  
 of tears  
 Is over ; nor believe thou that Romance  
 Closes against pure Faith her rich do-  
 main.  
 Shall only blossoms flourish there ?  
 Arise,  
 Far sighted bride ! look forward !  
 clearer views  
 And higher hopes lie under calmer skies.  
 Fortune in vain call'd out to thee ; in  
 vain  
 Rays from high regions darted ; Wit  
 pour'd out  
 His sparkling treasures ; Wisdom laid  
 his crown  
 Of richer jewels at thy reckless feet.  
 Well hast thou chosen. I repeat the  
 words,

<sup>1</sup> For the marriage of the daughter of Rose  
 Aymer's half-sister. Called by Landor "my  
 tenderest lay." See *The Three Roses*, p. 457, and  
 note there.

Adding as true ones, not untold before,  
 That incense must have fire for its as-  
 cent,  
 Else 'tis inert and can not reach the idol.  
 Youth is the sole equivalent of youth.  
 Enjoy it while it lasts ; and last it will ;  
 Love can prolong it in despite of Years.  
 1846.

## LYRICS

"Do you remember me ? or are you  
 proud ?"  
 Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimm'd  
 crowd,  
 Ianthe said, and looked into my eyes.  
 "A yes, a yes, to both : for Memory  
 Where you but once have been must ever  
 be,  
 And at your voice Pride from his  
 throne must rise."

No, my own love of other years !  
 No, it must never be.  
 Much rests with you that yet endears,  
 Alas ! but what with me ?  
 Could those bright years o'er me revolve  
 So gay, o'er you so fair,  
 The pearl of life we would dissolve  
 And each the cup might share.  
 You show that truth can ne'er decay,  
 Whatever fate befalls ;  
 I, that the myrtle and the bay  
 Shoot fresh on ruin'd walls.

ONE year ago my path was green,  
 My footstep light, my brow serene ;  
 Alas ! and could it have been so  
 One year ago ?

There is a love that is to last  
 When the hot days of youth are past :  
 Such love did a sweet maid bestow  
 One year ago.

I took a leaflet from her braid  
 And gave it to another maid.  
 Love ! broken should have been thy bow  
 One year ago.

YES ; I write verses now and then,  
 But blunt and flaccid is my pen.  
 No longer talked of by young men  
 As rather clever :

In the last quarter are my eyes,  
You see it by their form and size ;  
Is it not time then to be wise ?  
Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve !  
While Time allows the short reprieve,  
Just look at me ! would you believe  
'Twas once a lover ?  
I cannot clear the five-bar gate,  
But, trying first its timbers' state,  
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait  
To trundle over.

Thro' gallopade I cannot swing  
The entangling blooms of Beauty's  
spring :  
I cannot say the tender thing,  
Be't true or false,  
And am beginning to opine  
Those girls are only half-divine  
Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine  
In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder,  
I wish them wiser, graver, older,  
Sedater, and no harm if colder  
And panting less.  
Ah ! people were not half so wild  
In former days, when, starchy mild,  
Upon her high-heel'd Essex smiled  
The brave Queen Bess.

With rosy hand a little girl pressed down  
A boss of fresh-cull'd cowslips in a rill :  
Often as they sprang up again, a frown  
Show'd she disliked resistance to her  
will :  
But when they droop'd their heads and  
shone much less,  
She shook them to and fro, and threw  
them by,  
And tripped away. "Ye loathe the  
heaviness  
Ye love to cause, my little girls !"  
thought I,  
"And what had shone for you, by you  
must die."

You smiled, you spoke, and I believed,  
By every word and smile deceived.  
Another man would hope no more ;  
Nor hope I what I hoped before :  
But let not this last wish be vain ;  
Deceive, deceive me once again !

Remain, ah not in youth alone,  
Tho' youth, where you are, long will  
stay,  
But when my summer days are gone,  
And my autumnal haste away,  
"Can I be always by your side ?"  
No ; but the hours you can, you must,  
Nor rise at Death's approaching stride,  
Nor go when dust is gone to dust.

Soon, O Ianthe ! life is o'er,  
And sooner beauty's heavenly smile :  
Grant only (and I ask no more),  
Let love remain that little while.

#### TO A CYCLAMEN

I come to visit thee again,  
My little flowerless cyclamen ;  
To touch the hand, almost to press,  
That cheered thee in thy loneliness.  
What could thy careful guardian find  
Of thee in form, of me in mind,  
What is there in us rich or rare,  
To make us claim a moment's care ?  
Unworthy to be so caressed,  
We are but withering leaves at best.

Give me the eyes that look on mine.  
And, when they see them dimly shine,  
Are moister than they were.  
Give me the eyes that fain would find  
Some relics of a youthful mind  
Amid the wrecks of care.  
Give me the eyes that catch at last  
A few faint glimpses of the past,  
And, like the arkite dove,  
Bring back a long-lost olive-bough,  
And can discover even now  
A heart that once could love.

Twenty years hence my eyes may grow  
If not quite dim, yet rather so,  
Still yours from others they shall know  
Twenty years hence.

Twenty years hence tho' it may hap  
That I be call'd to take a nap  
In a cool cell where thunder-clap  
Was never heard,

There breathe but o'er my arch of grass  
A not too sadly sigh'd *Alas*,  
And I shall catch, ere you can pass,  
That winged word.

Proud word you never spoke, but you  
will speak  
Four not exempt from pride some  
future day.  
Resting on one white hand a warm wet  
cheek  
Over my open volume you will say,  
"This man loved *me*!" then rise and  
trip away.

Alas, how soon the hours are over  
Counted us out to play the lover!  
And how much narrower is the stage  
Allotted us to play the sage!  
But when we play the fool, how wide,  
The theatre expands! beside,  
How long the audience sits before us!  
How many prompters! what a chorus!  
1846.

## QUATRAINS

On the smooth brow and clustering hair  
Myrtle and rose! your wreath com-  
bine,  
The duller olive I would wear,  
Its constancy, its peace, be mine.

My hopes retire; my wishes as before  
Struggle to find their resting-place in  
vain;  
The ebbing sea thus beats against the  
shore;  
The shore repels it; it returns again.

Various the roads of life; in one  
All terminate, one lonely way.  
We go; and "Is he gone?"  
Is all our best friends say.

Is it not better at an early hour  
In its calm cell to rest the weary  
head,  
While birds are singing and while  
blooms the bower,  
Than sit the fire out and go starv'd to  
bed?  
1846.

I KNOW NOT WHETHER I AM  
PROUD

I KNOW not whether I am proud,  
But this I know, I hate the crowd:  
Therefore pray let me disengage  
My verses from the motley page,  
Where others far more sure to please  
Pour out their choral song with ease.

And yet perhaps, if some should tire  
With too much froth or too much fire,  
There is an ear that may incline  
Even to words so dull as mine.

1846.

THE DAY RETURNS, MY NATAL  
DAY

THE day returns, my natal day,  
Borne on the storm and pale with  
snow,  
And seems to ask me why I stay,  
Stricken by Time and bowed by Woe.

Many were once the friends who came  
To wish me joy; and there are some  
Who wish it now; but not the same:  
They are whence friend can never  
come.

Nor are they you my love watched o'er  
Cradled in innocence and sleep;  
You smile into my eyes no more,  
Nor see the bitter tears they weep.  
1846.

## HOW MANY VOICES GAILY SING

How many voices gaily sing,  
"O happy morn, O happy spring  
Of life!" Meanwhile there comes o'er  
me

A softer voice from Memory,  
And says, "If loves and hopes have  
flown

With years, think too what griefs are  
gone!"  
1846.

## TO ROBERT BROWNING

THERE is delight in singing, tho' none  
hear

Beside the singer: and there is delight  
In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone  
And see the prais'd far off him, far  
above.

Shakespeare is not our poet, but the  
world's,



Therefore on him no speech! and brief  
for thee,  
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive  
and hale,  
No man hath walked along our roads  
with step  
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue  
So varied in discourse. But warmer  
climes  
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing:  
the breeze  
Of Alpine heights thou playest with,  
borne on  
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where  
The Siren waits thee, singing song for  
song. 1846.

ON THE HELLENICS<sup>1</sup>

COME back, ye wandering Muses, come  
back home,  
Ye seem to have forgotten where it lies:  
Come, let us walk upon the silent sands  
Of Simois, where deep footmarks show  
long strides;  
Thence we may mount, perhaps, to  
higher ground,  
Where Aphrodité from Athenè won  
The golden apple, and from Herè too,  
And happy Ares shouted far below.  
Or would ye rather choose the grassy  
vale  
Where flows Anapos thro' anemones,  
Hyacinthis, and narcissuses, that bend  
To show their rival beauty in the  
stream?  
Bring with you each her lyre, and each  
in turn  
Temper a graver with a lighter song. 1847.

## THRASYMEDES AND EUNOE

WHO will away to Athens with me?  
who  
Loves choral songs and maidens crown'd  
with flowers,  
Unenvious? mount the pinnace; hoist  
the sail.  
I promise ye, as many as are here,

<sup>1</sup> Prefixed to the second edition of Landor's *Hellenics*, 1847. It is here given slightly out of the exact chronological order, that it may stand as an introduction to the chief poems from the *Hellenics*, those of 1846 as well as those of 1847.

Other poems of Landor's, such as *The Death of Artemidora*, *Clione to Aspasia*, *The Shades of Agamemnon and Iphigenia*, etc., though originally published in other collections, and therefore not given here with the *Hellenics*, were ultimately included by Landor among them.

Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me,  
taste  
From unrinsed barrel the diluted wine  
Of a low vineyard or a plant ill-pruned,  
But such as anciently the Ægean isles  
Pour'd in libation at their solemn feasts:  
And the same goblets shall ye grasp,  
embossed  
With no vile figures of loose languid  
boors,  
But such as gods have lived with and  
have led.  
The sea smiles bright before us. What  
white sail  
Plays yonder? What pursues it? Like  
two hawks

Away they fly. Let us away in time  
To overtake them. Are they menaces  
We hear? And shall the strong repulse  
the weak,  
Enraged at her defender? Hippias!  
Art thou the man? 'Twas Hippias. He  
had found  
His sister borne from the Cecropian port  
By Thrasymedes. And reluctantly?  
Ask, ask the maiden; I have no reply.  
"Brother! O brother Hippias! O, if  
love,  
If pity, ever touch'd thy breast, forbear!  
Strike not the brave, the gentle, the be-  
loved,  
My Thrasymedes, with his cloak alone  
Protecting his own head and mine from  
harm."  
"Didst thou not once before," cried  
Hippias,  
Regardless of his sister, hoarse with  
wrath  
At Thrasymedes, "didst not thou, dog-  
eyed,  
Dare, as she walk'd up to the Parthenon,  
On the most holy of all holy days,  
In sight of all the city, dare to kiss  
Her maiden cheek?"  
"Ay, before all the gods,  
Ay, before Pallas, before Artemis,  
Ay, before Aphrodité, before Herè,  
I dared: and dare again. Arise, my  
spouse!  
Arise! and let my lips quaff purity  
From thy fair open brow."

The sword was up,  
And yet he kiss'd her twice. Some God  
withheld  
The arm of Hippias; his proud blood  
seeth'd slower  
And smote his breast less angrily; he  
laid [spake thus:  
His hand on the white shoulder, and

"Ye must return with me. A second time  
 Offended, will our sire Peisistratos  
 Pardon the affront? Thou shouldst  
 have ask'd thyself  
 This question ere the sail first flapp'd the  
 mast."  
 "Already thou hast taken life from me ;  
 Put up thy sword," said the sad youth,  
 his eyes  
 Sparkling ; but whether love or rage or  
 grief  
 They sparkled with, the Gods alone could  
 see.  
 Piræus they re-entered, and their ship  
 Drove up the little waves against the  
 quay,  
 Whence was thrown out a rope from one  
 above,  
 And Hippias caught it. From the virgin's  
 waist  
 Her lover dropped his arm, and blushed  
 to think  
 He had retain'd it there in sight of rude  
 Irreverent men : he led her forth, nor  
 spake.  
 Hippias walked silent too, until they  
 reached  
 The mansion of Peisistratos her sire.  
 Serenely in his sternness did the prince  
 Look on them both awhile : they saw not  
 him,  
 For both had cast their eyes upon the  
 ground.  
 "Are these the pirates thou hast taken,  
 son?"  
 Said he, "Worse, father ! worse than  
 pirates they,  
 Who thus abuse thy patience, thus abuse  
 Thy pardon, thus abuse the holy rites  
 Twice over."  
 "Well hast thou performed thy duty,"  
 Firmly and gravely said Peisistratos.  
 "Nothing then, rash young man ! could  
 turn thy heart  
 From Eunoe, my daughter?"  
 "Nothing, sir,  
 Shall ever turn it. I can die but once  
 And love but once. O Eunoe ! farewell !"  
 "Nay, she shall see what thou canst bear  
 for her."  
 "O father ! shut me in my chamber,  
 shut me  
 In my poor mother's tomb, dead or alive,  
 But never let me see what he can bear ;  
 I know how much that is, when borne  
 for me."  
 "Not yet : come on. And lag not thou  
 behind,

Pirate of virgin and of princely hearts !  
 Before the people and before the Goddess  
 Thou hadst evinced the madness of thy  
 passion,  
 And now wouldst bear from home and  
 plenteousness  
 To poverty and exile this my child."  
 Then shuddered Thrasymedes, and ex-  
 claim'd,

"I see my crime : I saw it not before.  
 The daughter of Peisistratos was born  
 Neither for exile nor for poverty,  
 Ah ! nor for me !" He would have wept.  
 but one  
 Might see him, and weep worse. The  
 prince unmoved  
 Strode on, and said, "To-morrow shall  
 the people,  
 All who beheld thy trespasses, behold  
 The justice of Peisistratos, the love  
 He bears his daughter, and the reverence  
 In which he holds the highest law of  
 God."  
 He spake ; and on the morrow they  
 were one. 1846.

## IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom  
 At Aulis, and when all beside the King  
 Had gone away, took his right hand, and  
 said,  
 "O father ! I am young and very happy.  
 I do not think the pious Calchas heard  
 Distinctly what the Goddess spake.  
 Old-age  
 Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who  
 knew  
 My voice so well, sometimes misunder-  
 stood  
 While I was resting on her knee both  
 arms  
 And hitting it to make her mind my  
 words,  
 And looking in her face, and she in mine,  
 Might he not also hear one word amiss,  
 Spoken from so far off, even from Olym-  
 pus?"  
 The father placed his cheek upon her  
 head,  
 And tears dropped down it, but the king  
 of men  
 Replied not. Then the maiden spake  
 once more. [thou not  
 "O father ! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st  
 Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,  
 Listened to fondly, and awakened me  
 To hear my voice amid the voice of  
 birds,

When it was inarticulate as theirs,  
 And the down deadened it within the  
 nest?"  
 He moved her gently from him, silent  
 still,  
 And this, and this alone, brought tears  
 from her,  
 Although she saw fate nearer : then with  
 sighs,  
 "I thought to have laid down my hair  
 before  
 Benignant Artemis, and not have  
 dimmed  
 Her polished altar with my virgin blood ;  
 I thought to have selected the white  
 flowers  
 To please the Nymphs, and to have  
 asked of each  
 By name, and with no sorrowful regret,  
 Whether, since both my parents willed  
 the change,  
 I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipped  
 brow ;  
 And (after those who mind us girls the  
 most,)  
 Adore our own Athena, that she would  
 Regard me mildly with her azure eyes,  
 But father! to see you no more, and see  
 Your love, O father! go ere I am  
 gone . . ."  
 Gently he moved her off, and drew her  
 back,  
 Bending his lofty head far over hers,  
 And the dark depths of nature heaved  
 and burst.  
 He turn'd away; not far, but silent  
 still.  
 She now first shuddered; for in him, so  
 nigh,  
 So long a silence seemed the approach of  
 death,  
 And like it. Once again she raised her  
 voice.  
 "O father! if the ships are now de-  
 tained,  
 And all your vows move not the Gods  
 above,  
 When the knife strikes me there will be  
 one prayer  
 The less to them: and purer can there  
 be  
 Any, or more fervent than the daugh-  
 ter's prayer  
 For her dear father's safety and suc-  
 cess?" [resolve.  
 A groan that shook him shook not his  
 An aged man now entered, and without  
 One word, stepped slowly on, and took  
 the wrist

Of the pale maiden. She looked up and  
 saw  
 The fillet of the priest and calm cold  
 eyes.  
 Then turned she where her parent  
 stood, and cried  
 "O father! grieve no more: the ships  
 can sail." 1846.

#### THE HAMADRYAD<sup>1</sup>

RHAICOS was born amid the hills where-  
 from  
 Gnidos the light of Caria is discern'd,  
 And small are the white-crested that  
 play near,  
 And smaller onward are the purple  
 waves.  
 Thence festal choirs were visible, all  
 crown'd  
 With rose and myrtle if they were in-  
 born;  
 If from Pandion sprang they, on the  
 coast  
 Where stern Athenè raised her citadel,  
 Then olive was intertwined with violets  
 Cluster'd in bosses, regular and large.  
 For various men wore various coronals;  
 But one was their devotion; 'twas to  
 her  
 Whose laws all follow, her whose smile  
 withdraws  
 The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from  
 Zeus,  
 And whom in his chill caves the mu-  
 table  
 Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, re-  
 veres,  
 And whom his brother, stubborn Dis,  
 hath pray'd  
 To turn in pity the averted cheek  
 Of her he bore away, with promises,  
 Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx  
 itself,  
 To give her daily more and sweeter  
 flowers  
 Than he made drop from her on Enna's  
 dell.  
 Rhaicos was looking from his father's  
 door  
 At the long trains that hastened to the  
 town  
 From all the valleys, like bright rivu-  
 lets  
 Gurgling with gladness, wave outrun-  
 ning wave.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Lowell's poem. *Rhæcus*, which gives  
 a somewhat different version of the same story.

And thought it hard he might not also  
 go  
 And offer up one prayer, and press one  
 hand,  
 He knew not whose. The father call'd  
 him in,  
 And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle  
 games;  
 Long enough I have lived to find them  
 so."  
 And ere he ended sighed; as old men do  
 Always, to think how idle such games  
 are.  
 "I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in  
 his heart,  
 And wanted proof.  
 "Suppose thou go and help  
 Echeion at the hill, to bark yon oak  
 And lop its branches off, before we  
 delve  
 About the trunk and ply the root with  
 axe:  
 This we may do in winter."  
 Rhaicos went;  
 For thence he could see farther, and see  
 more  
 Of those who hurried to the city-gate.  
 Echeion he found there with naked arm  
 Swart-hair'd, strong-sinew'd, and his  
 eyes intent  
 Upon the place where first the axe  
 should fall:  
 He held it upright. "There are bees  
 about,  
 Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious  
 eld,  
 "Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The  
 youth  
 Inclined his ear, afar, and warily,  
 And cavern'd in his hand. He heard a  
 buzz  
 At first, and then the sound grew soft  
 and clear,  
 And then divided into what seem'd tune,  
 And there were words upon it, plaintive  
 words.  
 He turn'd, and said, "Echeion! do not  
 strike  
 That tree: it must be hollow; for some  
 god  
 Speaks from within. Come thyself  
 near." Again  
 Both turn'd toward it: and behold!  
 there sat  
 Upon the moss below, with her two  
 palms  
 Pressing it, on each side, a maid in  
 form.  
 Downcast were her long eyelashes, and

Her cheek, but never mountain-ash dis-  
 play'd  
 Berries of color like her lip so pure,  
 Nor were the anemones about her hair  
 Soft, smooth and wavering like the face  
 beneath.  
 "What dost thou here?" Echeion, half-  
 afraid,  
 Half-angry cried. She lifted up her eyes,  
 But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew  
 one step  
 Backward, for fear came likewise over  
 him,  
 But not such fear: he panted, gasp'd,  
 drew in  
 His breath, and would have turn'd it  
 into words,  
 But could not into one.  
 "O send away  
 That sad old man!" said she. The old  
 man went  
 Without a warning from his master's  
 son,  
 Glad to escape, for sorely he now fear'd,  
 And the axe shone behind him in their  
 eyes.  
 Hamad. And wouldst thou too shed  
 the most innocent  
 Of blood? No vow demands it; no god  
 wills  
 The oak to bleed.  
 Rhaicos. Who art thou? whence?  
 why here?  
 And whither wouldst thou go? Among  
 the robed  
 In white or saffron, or the hue that most  
 Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none  
 Array'd as thou art. What so beautiful  
 As that gray robe which clings about  
 thee close,  
 Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to  
 trees,  
 Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,  
 As, touch'd by zephyrs, fall and rise the  
 boughs  
 Of graceful platan by the river-side?  
 Hamad. Lovest thou well thy father's  
 house?  
 Rhaicos. Indeed  
 I love it, well I love it, yet would leave  
 For thine, where'er it be, my father's  
 house,  
 With all the marks upon the door, that  
 show  
 My growth at every birthday since the  
 third,  
 And all the charms, o'erpowering evil  
 eyes,  
 My mother nail'd for me against my bed,

And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)  
Won in my race last spring from Euty-  
chos.

*Hamad.* Bethink thee what it is to leave a home  
Thou never yet hast left, one night, one day.

*Rhaicos.* No, 'tis not hard to leave it; 'tis not hard  
To leave, O maiden, that paternal home,  
If there be one on earth whom we may love

First, last, for ever; one who says that she  
Will love for ever too. To say which word,

Only to say it, surely is enough . . .  
It shows such kindness . . . if 'twere possible

We at the moment think she would indeed.

*Hamad.* Who taught thee all this folly at thy age?

*Rhaicos.* I have seen lovers and have learned to love.

*Hamad.* But wilt thou spare the tree?

*Rhaicos.* My father wants  
The bark; the tree may hold its place awhile.

*Hamad.* Awhile! thy father numbers then my days?

*Rhaicos.* Are there no others where the moss beneath

Is quite as tufty? Who would send thee forth

Or ask thee why thou tarriest? Is thy flock

Anywhere near?

*Hamad.* I have no flock: I kill  
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,

The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful

(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source

Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou never heard

Of Hamadryads?

*Rhaicos.* Heard of them I have:  
Tell me some tale about them. May I sit

Beside thy feet? Art thou not tired? The herbs

Are very soft; I will not come too nigh;  
Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor doubt.

[plore  
Stay, stay an instant: let me first ex-

If any acorn of last year be left  
Within it; thy thin robe too ill protects  
Thy dainty limbs against the harm one small

Acorn may do. Here's none. Another day

Trust me; till then let me sit opposite.

*Hamad.* I seat me; be thou seated, and content.

*Rhaicos.* O sight for gods! ye men below! adore

The Aphroditè. Is she there below?  
Or sits she here before me? as she sate

Before the shepherd on those heights that shade

The Hellespont, and brought his kindred woe.

*Hamad.* Reverence the higher Powers; nor deem amiss

Of her who pleads to thee, and would repay—

Ask not how much—but very much. Rise not;

No, *Rhaicos*, no! Without the nuptial vow

Love is unholy. Swear to me that none  
Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,  
Then take thou mine; then take it, not before.

*Rhaicos.* Hearken, all gods above!  
O Aphroditè!

O Herè! Let my vow be ratified!  
But wilt thou come into my father's

house?

*Hamad.* Nay: and of mine I cannot give thee part.

*Rhaicos.* Where is it?

*Hamad.* In this oak.

*Rhaicos.* Ay; now begins  
The tale of Hamadryad; tell it through.

*Hamad.* Pray of thy father never to cut down

My tree; and promise him, as well thou mayst,

That every year he shall receive from me  
More honey than will buy him nine fat

sheep,  
More wax than he will burn to all the

gods.  
Why fallest thou upon thy face? Some thorn

May scratch it, rash young man! Rise up; for shame!

*Rhaicos.* For shame I can not rise. O pity me!

I dare not sue for love. . . but do not hate!  
Let me once more behold thee. . . not once

more, [loved!  
But many days: let me love on. . . un-

I aimed too high : on my head the bolt  
Falls back, and pierces to the very  
brain.

*Hamad.* Go.. rather go, than make  
me say I love.

*Rhaicos.* If happiness is immortality,  
(And whence enjoy it else the gods  
above?)

I am immortal too : my vow is heard :  
Hark ! on the left .. Nay, turn not from  
me now,

I claim my kiss.

*Hamad.* Do men take first, then  
claim?

Do thus the seasons run their course with  
them ?

Her lips were seal'd, her head sank on  
his breast.

'Tis said that laughs were heard within  
the wood :

But who should hear them ? .. and whose  
laughs ? and why ?

Savory was the smell, and long past  
noon,

Thallinos ! in thy house : for marjoram,  
Basil and mint, and thyme and rose-  
mary,

Were sprinkled on the kid's wellroasted  
length,

Awaiting Rhaicos. Home he came at  
last,

Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,  
With head and eyes just o'er the maple  
plate.

"Thou seest but badly, coming from the  
sun,

Boy Rhaicos !" said the father. "That  
oak's bark

Must have been tough, with little sap  
between ;

It ought to run ; but it and I are old."

Rhaicos, although each morsel of the  
bread

Increased by chewing, and the meat grew  
cold

And tasteless to his palate, took a draught  
Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he  
was,

He thought not of until his father fill'd

The cup, averring water was amiss,  
But wine had been at all times pour'd on  
kid,

It was religion.

He thus fortified

Said, not quite boldly, and not quite  
abashed,

"Father, that oak is Zeus's own ; that  
oak

Year after year will bring thee wealth  
from wax

And honey. There is one who fears the  
gods

And the gods love—that one"

(He blush'd, nor said

What one)

"Has promised this, and may do more.

Thou hast not many moons to wait until  
The bees have done their best ; if then  
there come

Nor wax nor honey, let the tree be  
hewn."

"Zeus hath bestow'd on thee a  
prudent mind,"

Said the glad sire : "but look thou often  
there,

And gather all the honey thou canst find  
In every crevice, over and above

What has been promised ; would they  
reckon that ?"

Rhaicos went daily ; but the nymph as  
oft,

Invisible. To play at love, she knew,  
Stopping its breathings when it breathes  
most soft,

Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.  
She play'd on his : she fed upon his sighs ;

They pleased her when they gently  
waved her hair,

Cooling the pulses of her purple veins,  
And when her absence brought them

out, they pleased.

Even among the fondest of them all,  
What mortal or immortal maid is more

Content with giving happiness than  
pain ?

One day he was returning from the wood  
Despondently. She pitied him, and said

"Come back !" and twined her fingers in  
the hem

Above his shoulder. Then she led his  
steps

To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand  
Through lentisk and through oleander,

there

Bathed she his feet, lifting them on her  
lap

When bathed, and drying them in both  
her hands.

He dared complain ; for those who most  
are loved

Most dare it ; but not harsh was his  
complaint.

"O thou inconstant !" said he, "if stern  
law

Bind thee, or will, stronger than sternest  
law

O, let me know henceforward when to

The fruit of love that grows for me but here."

He spake ; and pluck'd it from its pliant stem.

"Impatient Rhaicos! Why thus intercept

The answer I would give? There is a bee Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my thoughts

And executes my wishes : I will send That messenger. If ever thou art false, Drawn by another, own it not, but drive My bee away ; then shall I know my fate, And—for thou must be wretched—weep at thine.

But often as my heart persuades to lay Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest, Expect her with thee, whether it be morn

Or eve, at any time when woods are safe."

Day after day the Hours beheld them blessed,

And season after season : years had past, Blessed were they still. He who asserts that Love

Ever is sated of sweet things, the same Sweet things he fretted for in earlier days,

Never, by Zeus! loved he a Hamadryad. The nights had now grown longer, and perhaps

The Hamadryads find them lone and dull

Among their woods ; one did, alas! She called

Her faithful bee : 't was when all bees should sleep,

And all did sleep but hers. She was sent forth

To bring that light which never wintry blast

Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,

The light that shines from loving eyes upon

Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.

Rhaicos was sitting at his father's hearth :

Between them stood the table, not o'er-spread

With fruits which autumn now profusely bore,

Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine ; but there

The draft-board was expanded ; at which game

Triumphant sat old Thallinos ; the son Was puzzled, vexed, discomfited, distraught.

A buzz was at his ear : up went his hand,

And it was heard no longer. The poor bee

Return'd, (but not until the morn'g shone bright)

And found the Hamadryad with her head

Upon her aching wrist, and showed one wing

Half-broken off, the other's meshes marr'd,

And there were bruises which no eye could see

Saving a Hamadryad's.

At this sight Down fell the languid brow, both hands fell down.

A shriek was carried to the ancient hall Of Thallinos : he heard it not : his son Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.

No bark was on the tree, no leaf was green,

The trunk was riven through. From that day forth

Nor word nor whisper sooth'd his ear, nor sound

Even of insect wing ; but loud laments The woodmen and the shepherds one

long year Heard day and night ; for Rhaicos would not quit

The solitary place, but moan'd and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O guest,

To find set duly on the hollow stone.

1846.

#### ACON AND RHODOPÉ ; OR, INCONSTANCY

(A Sequel)

THE Year's twelve daughters had in turn gone by,

Of measured pace though varying mien all twelve,

Some froward, some sedater, some adorn'd

For festival, some reckless of attire.

The snow had left the mountain-top ;

fresh flowers Had withered in the meadow ; fig and prune

Hung wrinkling ; the last apple glow'd  
amid  
Its freckled leaves ; and weary oxen  
blink'd  
Between the trodden corn and twisted  
vine,  
Under whose bunches stood the empty  
crate,  
To creak ere long beneath them carried  
home.  
This was the season when twelve months  
before,  
O gentle Hamadryad, true to love !  
Thy mansion, thy dim mansion in the  
wood  
Was blasted and laid desolate ; but none  
Dared violate its precincts, none dared  
pluck  
The moss beneath it, which alone re-  
main'd  
Of what was thine.

Old Thallinos sat mute  
In solitary sadness. The strange tale  
(Not until Rhaicos died, but then the  
whole)  
Echeion had related, whom no force  
Could ever make look back upon the  
oaks.

The father said, "Echeion ! thou must  
weigh,  
Carefully, and with steady hand, enough  
(Although no longer comes the store as  
once !)

Of wax to burn all day and night upon  
That hollow stone where milk and honey  
lie :  
So may the gods, so may the dead, be  
pleas'd !"

Thallinos bore it thither in the morn,  
And lighted it and left it.

First of those  
Who visited upon this solemn day  
The Hamadryad's oak, were Rhodopé  
And Acon ; of one age, one hope, one  
trust.

Graceful was she as was the nymph  
whose fate  
She sorrowed for : he slender, pale, and  
first

Lapp'd by the flame of love : his father's  
lands [afar.  
Were fertile, herds lowed over them  
Now stood the two aside the hollow stone  
And look'd with steadfast eyes toward  
the oak

Shivered and black and bare.

"May never we  
Love as they loved !" said Acon. She  
at this

Smiled, for he said not what he meant to  
say,  
And thought not of its bliss, but of its  
end.  
He caught the flying smile, and blush'd,  
and vow'd  
Nor time nor other power, whereto the  
might  
Of love hath yielded and may yield  
again,  
Should alter his.

The father of the youth  
Wanted not beauty for him, wanted not  
Song, that could lift earth's weight  
from off his heart,

Discretion, that could guide him thro'  
the world,

Innocence, that could clear his way to  
heaven :

Silver and gold and land, not green be-  
fore

The ancestral gate, but purple under  
skies

Bending far off, he wanted for his heir.  
Fathers have given life, but virgin  
heart

They never gave ; and dare they then  
control

Or check it harshly ? dare they break a  
bond

Girt round it by the holiest Power on  
high ?

Acon was grieved, he said, grieved  
bitterly,

But Acon had complied . . 'twas duti-  
ful :

Crush thy own heart, Man ! Man ! but  
fear to wound

The gentler, that relies on thee alone,  
By thee created, weak or strong by thee ;  
Touch it not but for worship ; watch be-  
fore

Its sanctuary ; nor leave it till are closed  
The temple-doors and the last lamp is  
spent.

Rhodopé, in her soul's waste solitude,  
Sate mournful by the dull-resounding  
sea,

Often not hearing it, and many tears  
Had the cold breezes hardened on her  
cheek.

Meanwhile he sauntered in the wood of  
oaks,

Nor shun'd to look upon the hollow  
stone

That held the milk and honey, nor to  
lay

His plighted hand where recently 'twas  
laid



Opposite hers, when finger playfully  
Advanced and pushed back finger, on  
each side.  
He did not think of this, as she would  
do  
If she were there alone.

The day was hot;  
The moss invited him; it cool'd his  
cheek,  
It cool'd his hands; he thrust them into  
it

And sank to slumber. Never was there  
dream

Divine as his. He saw the Hamadryad.  
She took him by the arm and led him on  
Along a valley, where profusely grew  
The smaller lilies with their pendent  
bells,

And, hiding under mint, chill drosera,  
The violet shy of butting cyclamen,  
The feathery fern, and, browser of moist  
banks,

Her offspring round her, the soft straw-  
berry;

The quivering spray of ruddy tamarisk,  
The oleander's light-haired progeny  
Breathing bright freshness in each  
other's face,

And graceful rose, bending her brow,  
with cup

Of fragrance and of beauty, boon for  
Gods.

The fragrance fill'd his breast with such  
delight

His senses were bewildered, and he  
thought

He saw again the face he most had  
loved.

He stopped: the Hamadryad at his side  
Now stood between: then drew him far-  
ther off:

He went, compliant as before: but soon  
Verdure had ceased: altho' the ground  
was smooth,

Nothing was there delightful. At this  
change

He would have spoken, but his guide  
repressed

All questioning, and said,

"Weak youth! what brought  
Thy footstep to this wood, my native  
haunt,

My life-long residence? this bank,  
where first

I sate with him . . . the faithful (now I  
know,

Too late!) the faithful Rhaicos. Haste  
thee home:

Be happy, if thou canst; but come no

Where those whom death alone could  
sever, died."

He started up: the moss whereon he  
slept

Was dried and withered: deadlier pale-  
ness spread

Over his cheek; he sickened: and the  
sire

Had land enough; it held his only son.  
1847.

#### MENELAUS AND HELEN AT TROY

*After the fall of Troy, Helen is pursued  
by Menelaus up the steps of the pal-  
ace; an old attendant deprecates  
and intercepts his vengeance.*

*Menelaus.* Out of my way! Off! or  
my sword may smite thee

Heedless of venerable age. And thou  
Fugitive! stop. Stand, traitress, on that  
stair—

Thou mountest not another, by the  
gods!

Now take the death thou meritest, the  
death

Zeus who presides o'er hospitality,  
And every other god whom thou hast  
left,

And every other who abandons thee  
In this accursed city, sends at last.

Turn, vilest of vile slaves! turn, para-  
mour

Of what all other women hate, of cow-  
ards,

Turn, lest this hand wrench back thy  
head, and toss

It and its odors to the dust and flames.

*Helen.* Welcome, the death thou  
promisest! Not fear

But shame, obedience, duty, make me  
turn.

*Menelaus.* Duty! false harlot!

*Helen.* Name too true! severe  
Precursor to the blow that is to fall.

It should alone suffice for killing me.

*Menelaus.* Ay, weep: be not the only  
one in Troy

Who wails not on this day—its last—  
the day

Thou and thy crimes darken with dead  
on dead.

*Helen.* Spare! spare! O let the last  
that falls be me,

There are but young and old.

*Menelaus.* There are but guilty  
Where thou art, and the sword strikes  
none amiss.

Hearst thou not the creeping blood  
buzz near  
Like flies? or wouldst thou rather hear  
it hiss  
Louder, against the flaming roofs thrown  
down  
Wherewith the streets are pathless? Ay.  
but vengeance  
Springs over all; and Nemesis and Atë  
Drove back the flying ashes with both  
hands.

I never saw thee weep till now: and  
now

There is no pity in thy tears. The tiger  
Leaves not her young athirst for the  
first milk,  
As thou didst. Thine could scarce have  
clasp'd thy knee

If she had felt thee leave her.

*Helen.* O my child!

My only one! thou livest: 'tis enough;  
Hate me, abhor me, curse me—these are  
duties—

Call me but Mother in the shades of  
death!

She now is twelve years old, when the  
bud swells

And the first colors of uncertain life

Begin to tinge it.

*Menelaus (aside.)* Can she think  
of home?

Hers once, mine yet, and sweet Her-  
mione's!

Is there one spark that cheer'd my hearth,  
one left,

For thee, my last of love!

Scorn, righteous scorn  
Blows it from me—but thou mayst—  
never, never—

Thou shalt not see her even there. The  
slave

On earth shall scorn thee, and the damn'd  
below.

*Helen.* Delay not either fate. If death  
is mercy,

Send me among the captives; so that  
Zeus

May see his offspring led in chains away,  
And thy hard brother, pointing with his  
sword [shore,

At the last wretch that crouches on the  
Cry, "She alone shall never sail for  
Greece!"

*Menelaus.* Hast thou more words?

Her voice is musical  
As the young maids who sing to Artemis:  
How glossy is that yellow braid my grasp  
Seiz'd and let loose! Ah! can then years  
have past

Since—but the children of the gods, like  
them,

Suffer not age.

*Helen!* speak honestly,  
And thus escape my vengeance—was it  
force

That bore thee off?

*Helen.* It was some evil god.

*Menelaus.* Helping that hated man?

*Helen.* How justly hated!

*Menelaus.* By thee too?

*Helen.* Hath he not made thee un-  
happy?

O do not strike.

*Menelaus.* Wretch!

*Helen.* Strike, but do not speak.

*Menelaus.* Lest thou remember me  
against thy will.

*Helen.* Lest I look up and see you  
wroth and sad,

Against my will; O! how against my will  
They know above, they who perhaps  
can pity.

*Menelaus.* They shall not save thee.

*Helen.* Then indeed they pity.

*Menelaus.* Prepare for death.

*Helen.* Not from that hand: 'twould  
pain you.

*Menelaus.* Touch not my hand.—Easily  
dost thou drop it!

*Helen.* Easy are all things, do but thou  
command.

*Menelaus.* Look up then.

*Helen.* To the hardest proof of all  
I am now bidden; bid me not look up.

*Menelaus.* She looks as when I led her  
on behind

The torch and fife, and when the blush  
o'erspread

Her girlish face at tripping in the myrtle  
On the first step before the wreath'd

gate.

Approach me. Fall not on thy knees.

*Helen.* The hand  
That is to slay me, best may slay me thus.

I dare no longer see the light of heaven,  
Not thine—alas! the light of heaven to

me.

*Menelaus.* Follow me.

She holds out both arms—and now  
Drops them again.—She comes.—Why

stoppest thou?

*Helen.* O Menelaus! could thy heart  
know mine,

As once it did—for then they did con-  
verse,

Generous the one, the other not un-  
worthy— [than guilt.

Thou wouldst find sorrow deeper even

*Menelaus.* And I must lead her by the hand again?

Nought shall persuade me. Never. She draws back—

The true alone and loving sob like her. Come Helen! [*He takes her hand.*]

*Helen.* O let never Greek see this! Hide me from Argos, from Amyclai hid me,

Hide me from all.

*Menelaus.* Thy anguish is too strong For me to strive with.

*Helen.* Leave it all to me.

*Menelaus.* Peace! Peace! The wind, I hope, is fair for Sparta. 1847.

#### ÆSCHYLOS AND SOPHOCLES

*Sophocles.* Thou goest then, and leavest none behind Worthy to rival thee!

*Æschylos.* Nay, say not so. Whose is the hand that now is pressing mine?

A hand I may not ever press again! What glorious forms hath it brought boldly forth

From Pluto's realm! The blind old *Œdipos*

Was led on one side by *Antigone*, *Sophocles* propped the other.

*Sophocles.* *Sophocles* Sooth'd not *Prometheus* chain'd upon his rock, Keeping the vultures and the Gods away;

*Sophocles* is not greater than the chief Who conquered *Ilium*, nor could he revenge

His murder, or stamp everlasting brand Upon the brow of that adulterous wife.

*Æschylos.* Live, and do more. Thine is the *Lemnian* isle, And thou has placed the arrows in the hand

Of *Philoctetes*, hast assuaged his wounds And given his aid without which Greece had fail'd.

*Sophocles.* I did indeed drive off the pest of flies;

We also have our pest of them which buzz

About our honey, darken it, and sting; We laugh at them, for under hands like ours,

Without the wing that *Philoctetes* shook,

One single feather crushes the whole swarm.

I must be grave;

Hath Sicily such charms Above our Athens? Many charms hath she,

But she hath kings. Accursed be the race!

*Æschylos.* But where kings honor better men than they Let kings be honored too.

The laurel crown Surmounts the golden; wear it; and farewell. 1847.

#### SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON

THE tongue of England, that which myriads

Have spoken and will speak, were paralyzed

Hereafter, but two mighty men stand forth

Above the flight of ages, two alone;

One crying out,

*All nations spoke thro' me.*

The other:

*True; and thro' this trumpet burst God's word; the fall of Angels, and the doom*

*First of immortal, then of mortal, Man. Glory! be glory! not to me, to God.*

1853.

#### TO YOUTH

WHERE art thou gone, light-ankled Youth?

With wing at either shoulder, And smile that never left thy mouth Until the Hours grew colder:

Then somewhat seem'd to whisper near That thou and I must part;

I doubted it: I felt no fear, No weight upon the heart:

If aught befell it, Love was by

And roll'd it off again;

So, if there ever was a sigh, 'Twas not a sigh of pain.

I may not call thee back; but thou

Returnest when the hand

Of gentle Sleep waves o'er my brow His poppy-crested wand;

Then smiling eyes bend over mine,

Then lips once pressed invite;

But sleep hath given a silent sign,

And both, alas! take flight.

1853.

## TO AGE

WELCOME, old friend! These many  
years  
Have we lived door by door:  
The Fates have laid aside their shears  
Perhaps for some few more.

I was indocile at an age  
When better boys were taught,  
But thou at length hast made me sage,  
If I am sage in aught.

Little I know from other men,  
Too little they from me,  
But thou hast pointed well the pen  
That writes these lines to thee.

Thanks for expelling Fear and Hope,  
One vile, the other vain;  
One's scourge, the other's telescope,  
I shall not see again:

Rather what lies before my feet  
My notice shall engage—  
He who hath braved Youth's dizzy heat  
Dreads not the frost of Age. 1853.

THE CHRYSOLITES AND RUBIES  
BACCHUS BRINGS

THE chrysolites and rubies Bacchus  
brings  
To crown the feast where swells the  
broad-vein'd brow,  
Where maidens blush at what the min-  
strel sings,  
They who have coveted may covet  
now.

Bring me, in cool alcove, the grape un-  
crushed,  
The peach of pulpy cheek and down  
mature,  
Where every voice (but bird's or child's)  
is hushed,  
And every thought, like the brook  
nigh, runs pure. 1853.

## SO THEN, I FEEL NOT DEEPLY!

So then, I feel not deeply! if I did,  
I should have seized the pen and pierced  
therewith  
The passive world!  
And thus thou reasonest?  
Well hast thou known the lover's, not so  
well

The poet's heart: while that heart  
bleeds, the hand  
Presses it close. Grief must run on and  
pass  
Into near Memory's more quiet shade  
Before it can compose itself in song.  
He who is agonized and turns to show  
His agony to those who sit around,  
Seizes the pen in vain: thought, fancy,  
power,  
Rush back into his bosom; all the  
strength  
Of genius can not draw them into light  
From under mastering Grief; but  
Memory,  
The Muse's mother, nurses, rears them  
up,  
Informs, and keeps them with her all her  
days. 1853.

YEARS, MANY PARTI-COLORED  
YEARS

YEARS, many parti-colored years,  
Some have crept on, and some have  
flown  
Since first before me fell those tears  
I never could see fall alone.  
Years, not so many, are to come,  
Years not so varied, when from you  
One more will fall: when, carried home,  
I see it not, nor hear *adieu*. 1853.

I WONDER NOT THAT YOUTH  
REMAINS

I wonder not that Youth remains  
With you, wherever else she flies:  
Where could she find such fair domains,  
Where bask beneath such sunny eyes?  
1853.

## ON MUSIC

MANY love music but for music's sake,  
Many because her touches can awake  
Thoughts that repose within the breast  
half-dead,  
And rise to follow where she loves to  
lead.  
What various feelings come from days  
gone by!  
What tears from far-off sources dim the  
eye!  
Few, when light fingers with sweet  
voices play  
And melodies swell, pause, and melt  
away,

Mind how at every touch, at every tone,  
A spark of life hath glisten'd and hath  
gone. 1853.

ROSE AYLMEYER'S HAIR, GIVEN BY  
HER SISTER

BEAUTIFUL spoils! borne off from van-  
quished death!  
Upon my heart's high altar shall ye  
lie,  
Moved but by only one adorer's breath,  
Retaining youth, rewarding constancy.  
1853.

DEATH STANDS ABOVE ME

DEATH stands above me, whispering low  
I know not what into my ear:  
Of his strange language all I know  
Is, there is not a word of fear. 1853.

ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTH-  
DAY

I STROVE with none; for none was worth  
my strife,  
Nature I loved, and next to Nature,  
Art;  
I warmed both hands before the fire of  
life,  
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.  
1853.

ON THE DEATH OF SOUTHEY

It was a dream (ah! what is not a  
dream?)  
In which I wander'd thro' a boundless  
space  
Peopled by those that peopled earth ere-  
while.  
But who conducted me? That gentle  
Power,  
Gentle as Death, Death's brother. On  
his brow  
Some have seen poppies; and perhaps  
among  
The many flowers about his wavy curls  
Poppies there might be; roses I am sure  
I saw, and dimmer amaranths between.  
Lightly I thought I leaped across a  
grave  
Smelling of cool fresh turf, and sweet it  
smelt.  
I would, but must not linger; I must on,  
To tell my dream before forgetfulness  
Sweeps it away, or breaks or changes it.

I was among the shades (if shades they  
were)  
And look'd around me for some friendly  
hand  
To guide me on my way, and tell me all  
That compass'd me around. I wish'd to  
find  
One no less firm or ready than the guide  
Of Alighieri, trustier far than he,  
Higher in intellect, more conversant  
With earth and heaven and whatap lies  
between.  
He stood before me—Southey.

Said I, "Thou art he,"  
"whom I was wishing."  
"That I know."  
Replied the genial voice and radiant eye.  
"We may be question'd, question we  
may not;  
For that might cause to bubble forth  
again  
Some bitter spring which crossed the  
pleasantest  
And shadiest of our paths."

Said I, "I do not ask,"  
"about your happiness; I see  
The same serenity as when we walked  
Along the downs of Clifton. Fifty years  
Have roll'd behind us since that summer-  
tide,

Nor thirty fewer since along the lake  
Of Lario, to Bellaggio villa-crown'd,  
Thro' the crisp waves I urged my side-  
ling bark,

Amid sweet salutations off the shore  
From lordly Milan's proudly courteous  
dames."

"Landor! I well remember it," said he,  
"I had just lost my first-born only boy,  
And then the heart is tender; lightest  
things

Sink into it, and dwell there evermore."  
The words were not yet spoken when  
the air

Blew balmier; and around the parent's  
neck

An Angel threw his arms: it was that  
son.

"Father! I felt you wished me," said  
the boy,

"Behold me here!"

Gentle the sire's embrace,  
Gentle his tone. "See here your father's  
friend!"

He gazed into my face, then meekly  
said

"He whom my father loves hath his re-  
ward  
On earth; a richer one awaits him  
here." 1853.

## ON SOUTHEY'S DEATH

FRIENDS! hear the words my wander-  
ing thoughts would say,  
And cast them into shape some other  
day.  
Southey, my friend of forty years, is  
gone,  
And, shattered by the fall, I stand alone.  
1858.

## HEART'S-EASE

THERE is a flower I wish to wear,  
But not until first worn by you . .  
Heart's-ease . . of all earth's flowers  
most rare;  
Bring it; and bring enough for two.  
1858.

THE THREE ROSES<sup>1</sup>

WHEN the buds began to burst,  
Long ago, with Rose the First,  
I was walking; joyous then  
Far above all other men,  
Till before us up there stood  
Britonferry's oaken wood,  
Whispering, "*Happy as thou art,  
Happiness and thou must part.*"  
Many summers have gone by  
Since a Second Rose and I  
(Rose from that same stem) have told  
This and other tales of old.  
She upon her wedding-day  
Carried home my tenderest lay:  
From her lap I now have heard  
Gleeful, chirping, Rose the Third,  
Not for *her* this hand of mine  
Rhyme with nuptial wreath shall twine;  
Cold and torpid it must lie,  
Mute the tongue and closed the eye.  
1858.

LATELY OUR SONGSTERS LOI-  
TERED IN GREEN LANES

LATELY our songsters loiter'd in green  
lanes,  
Content to catch the ballads of the  
plains;  
I fancied I had strength enough to  
climb  
A loftier station at no distant time,  
And might securely from intrusion doze  
Upon the flowers thro' which Ilissus  
flows.

<sup>1</sup> See pages 438 and 441. "Rose the Third" was the daughter of "the Second Rose," and thus the grand-niece of Rose Aymer.

In those pale olive grounds all voices  
cease,  
And from afar dust fills the paths of  
Greece.  
My slumber broken and my doublet  
torn,  
I find the laurel also bears a thorn.  
1863.

THESEUS AND HIPPOLYTA<sup>1</sup>

*Hippolyta.* Eternal hatred I have  
sworn against  
The persecutor of my sisterhood;  
In vain, proud son of Ægeus, hast thou  
snapped  
Their arrows and derided them; in vain  
Leadest thou me a captive; I can die,  
And die I will.

*Theseus.* Nay; many are the years  
Of youth and beauty for Hippolyta.

*Hippolyta.* I scorn my youth, I hate  
my beauty. Go!  
Monster! of all the monsters in these  
wilds  
Most frightful and most odious to my  
sight.

*Theseus.* I boast not that I saved thee  
from the bow  
Of Scythian.

*Hippolyta.* And for what? To die  
disgraced.

Strong as thou art, yet thou art not so  
strong  
As Death is, when we call him for sup-  
port.

*Theseus.* Him too will I ward off; he  
strikes me first,

*Hippolyta,* long after, when these eyes  
Are closed, and when the knee that  
supplicates  
Can bend no more.

*Hippolyta.* Is the man mad?

*Theseus.* He is.

*Hippolyta.* So, thou canst tell one  
truth, however false  
In other things.

*Theseus.* What other? Thou dost  
pause,

And thine eyes wander over the smooth  
turf

As if some gem (but gem thou wearest  
not)

Had fallen from the remnant of thy  
hair.

<sup>1</sup> Written by Landor immediately before its publication, at the age of eighty-eight. Perhaps the only other example in literature of such vigor and creative power, at such an age, is that of Sophocles.

Hippolyta ! speak plainly, answer me,  
What have I done to raise thy fear or  
hate ?

*Hippolyta.* Fear I despise, perfidy I  
abhor.

Unworthy man ! did Heracles delude  
The maids who trusted him ?

*Theseus.* Did ever I ?  
Whether he did or not, they never told  
me :

I would have chided him.

*Hippolyta.* Thou chide him ! thou !  
The Spartan mothers well remember  
thee.

*Theseus.* Scorn adds no beauty to the  
beautiful.

Heracles was beloved by Omphale,  
He never parted from her, but obey'd  
Her slightest wish, as Theseus will Hip-  
polyta's.

*Hippolyta.* Then leave me, leave me  
instantly ; I know

The way to my own country.

*Theseus.* This command,  
And only this, my heart must disobey.  
My country shall be thine, and there  
thy state

Regal.

*Hippolyta.* Am I a child ? Give me  
my own,  
And keep for weaker heads thy dia-  
dems.

Thermodon I shall never see again,  
Brightest of rivers, into whose clear  
depth

My mother plunged me from her  
warmer breast,

And taught me early to divide the waves  
With arms each day more strong, and  
soon to chase

And overtake the father swan, nor heed  
His hoarser voice or his uplifted wing.

Where are my sisters ? are there any left ?

*Theseus.* I hope it.

*Hippolyta.* And I fear it : theirs may  
be

A fate like mine ; which, O ye Gods, for-  
bid !

*Theseus.* I pity thee, and would as-  
suage thy grief.

*Hippolyta.* Pity me not : thy anger I  
could bear.

*Theseus.* There is no place for anger  
where thou art.

Commiseration even men may feel  
For those who want it : even the fiercer  
beasts

Lick the sore-wounded of a kindred  
race,

Hearing their cry, albeit they may not  
help.

*Hippolyta.* This is no falsehood : and  
can he be false

Who speaks it ?

I remember not the time  
When I have wept, it was so long ago.

Thou forcest tears from me, because . .  
because . .

I cannot hate thee as I ought to do.

1863.

#### AN AGED MAN WHO LOVED TO DOZE AWAY

An aged man who loved to doze away  
An hour by daylight, for his eyes were  
dim,

And he had seen too many suns go down  
And rise again, dreamed that he saw two  
forms

Of radiant beauty ; he would clasp them  
both,

But both flew stealthily away. He cried  
In his wild dream,

" I never thought, O youth,  
That thou, altho' so cherished, would'st  
return,

But I did think that he who came with  
thee,

Love, who could swear more sweetly  
than birds sing,

Would never leave me comfortless and  
lone."

A sigh broke through his slumber, not  
the last.

1863.

#### WELL I REMEMBER HOW YOU SMILED

WELL I remember how you smiled  
To see me write your name upon

The soft sea-sand. " O ! what a child !  
You think you're writing upon stone ! "

I have since written what no tide  
Shall ever wash away, what men

Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide  
And find Ianthe's name again.

1863.

#### TO MY NINTH DECADE

To my ninth decade I have totter'd on,  
And no soft arm bends now my steps

to steady ;  
She, who once led me where she would,

is gone,  
So when he calls me, Death shall find  
me ready.

1863.

# TENNYSON

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## TENNYSON

### CLARIBEL

#### A MELODY

WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall;  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone;  
At noon the wild bee hummeth  
About the moss'd headstone:  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,  
The callow throistle lispeth,  
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,  
The babbling runnel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth. 1830.

#### THE POET

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn  
of scorn,  
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good  
and ill,  
He saw thro' his own soul.  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay; with echoing feet he  
threaded  
The secretest walks of fame:  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts  
were headed  
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver  
tongue,  
And of so fierce a flight,  
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which  
bore  
Them earthward till they lit;  
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field  
flower,  
The fruitful wit

Cleaving took root, and springing forth  
anew  
Where'er they fell, behold,  
Like to the mother plant in semblance,  
grew  
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling  
The winged shafts of truth,  
To throng with stately blooms the  
breathing spring  
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with  
beams,  
Tho' one did fling the fire;  
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
dreams  
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the  
world  
Like one great garden show'd,  
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
upcurl'd,  
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sun-  
rise  
Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burn-  
ing eyes  
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes  
Sunn'd by those orient skies ;  
But round about the circles of the globes  
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame  
WISDOM, a name to shake  
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.  
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,  
And as the lightning to the thunder  
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,  
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No sword  
Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,  
But one poor poet's scroll, and with his word  
She shook the world. 1830.

#### THE LADY OF SHALOTT<sup>1</sup>

##### PART I

On either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
To many-tower'd Camelot ;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers.  
And the silent isle imbowers  
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses ; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
Skimming down to Camelot ;  
But who hath seen her wave her hand ?

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson, by his Son, I, 116-117.

Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,  
Down to tower'd Camelot ;  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy  
Lady of Shalott."

##### PART II

There she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colors gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot ;  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;  
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two:  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights  
And music, went to Camelot ;  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed :  
" I am half sick of shadows," said  
The Lady of Shalott.

##### PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,

the dazzling thro' the leaves,  
 upon the brazen greaves  
 of Sir Lancelot.  
 "Night for ever kneel'd  
 to his shield,  
 and on the yellow field,  
 remote Shalott.

his bridle glitter'd free,  
 like the branch of stars we see  
 through the golden Galaxy.  
 "Alls rang merrily  
 at the door to Camelot;  
 and his blazon'd baldrick slung  
 over his armor hung,  
 and the helmet's armor rung,  
 about the hall of Shalott.

He unclouded weather  
 had shone the saddle-leather,  
 and the helmet-feather  
 burned the flame together,  
 and they rode down to Camelot;  
 and the purple night,  
 with its many clusters bright,  
 and the meteor, trailing light,  
 over the hall of Shalott.

His ear-brow in sunlight glow'd;  
 his hooves his war-horse trode;  
 and his helmet flow'd  
 like curls as on he rode,  
 when he rode down to Camelot.  
 "And from the river  
 to the crystal mirror,  
 "by the river  
 Sir Lancelot.

And she left the loom,  
 and she saw three paces thro' the room,  
 and she saw the water-lily bloom,  
 and she saw the helmet and the plume,  
 and she saw the hawk'd down to Camelot.  
 "And she saw the web and floated wide;  
 and she saw the rack'd from side to side;  
 and she saw the "come upon me," cried  
 the Lady of Shalott.

## PART IV

And the east-wind straining,  
 and the woods were waning,  
 and the stream in his banks complain-

low sky raining  
 over'd Camelot;  
 and she found a boat  
 with a willow left afloat,  
 and about the prow she wrote  
 the Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse  
 Like some bold seer in a trance,  
 Seeing all his own mischance—  
 With a glassy countenance  
 Did she look to Camelot.  
 And at the closing of the day  
 She loos'd the chain, and down she lay;  
 The broad stream bore her far away,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
 That loosely flew to left and right—  
 The leaves upon her falling light—  
 Thro' the noises of the night  
 She floated down to Camelot;  
 And as the boat-head wound along  
 The willowy hills and fields among,  
 They heard her singing her last song,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.  
 For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
 The first house by the water-side,  
 Singing in her song she died,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
 By garden-wall and gallery,  
 A gleaming shape she floated by,  
 Dead-pale between the houses high,  
 Silent into Camelot.  
 Out upon the wharfs they came,  
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
 And round the prow they read her name,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?  
 And in the lighted palace near  
 Died the sound of royal cheer,  
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
 All the knights at Camelot:  
 But Lancelot mused a little space;  
 He said, "She has a lovely face;  
 God in his mercy lend her grace,  
 The Lady of Shalott." 1832, 1842.

## SONG: THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

It is the miller's daughter,  
 And she is grown so dear, so dear,  
 That I would be the jewel  
 That trembles in her ear;  
 For hid in ringlets day and night,  
 I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle  
 About her dainty dainty waist,  
 And her heart would beat against me,  
 In sorrow and in rest ;  
 And I should know if it beat right,  
 I 'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,  
 And all day long to fall and rise  
 Upon her balmy bosom,  
 With her laughter or her sighs ;  
 And I would lie so light, so light,  
 I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

1832.

## CENONE

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
 The swimming vapor slopes athwart the  
 glen,  
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine  
 to pine,  
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either  
 hand  
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway  
 down  
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below  
 them roars  
 The long brook falling thro' the cloven  
 ravine  
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
 Stands up and takes the morning ; but  
 in front  
 The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
 Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn  
 Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
 Her cheek had lost the rose, and round  
 her neck  
 Floated her hair or seem'd to float in  
 rest.  
 She, leaning on a fragment twined with  
 vine,  
 Sang to the stillness till the mountain-  
 shade  
 Sloped downward to her seat from the  
 upper cliff.

" O mother Ida, many fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 For now the noonday quiet holds the  
 hill ;  
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass ;  
 The lizard, with his shadow on the  
 stone, [dead.  
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds are

The purple flower droops, the golden  
 bee  
 Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.  
 My eyes are full of tears, my heart of  
 love,  
 My heart is breaking and my eyes are  
 dim,  
 And I am all aweary of my life.

" O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Hear me, O earth, hear me, O hills, O  
 caves  
 That house the cold-crown'd snake ! O  
 mountain brooks,  
 I am the daughter of a River God,  
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build up  
 all  
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder  
 walls  
 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
 A cloud that gather'd shape ; for it  
 may be  
 That, while I speak of it, a little while  
 My heart may wander from its deeper  
 woe.

" O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 I waited underneath the dawning hills ;  
 Aloft the mountain-lawn was dewy-  
 dark,  
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain-pine.  
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,  
 white-hooved,  
 Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

" O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Far off the torrent call'd me from the  
 cleft ;  
 Far up the solitary morning smote  
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-  
 dropt eyes  
 I sat alone ; white-breasted like a star  
 Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard  
 skin  
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny  
 hair  
 Cluster'd about his temples like a God's ;  
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-  
 bow brightens  
 When the wind blows the foam, and all  
 my heart  
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere  
 he came.

" Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-  
 white palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I  
look'd  
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of  
speech  
Came down upon my heart :

‘ My own CEnone,  
Beautiful-brow'd CEnone, my own soul,  
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind  
ingraven  
“ For the most fair,” would seem to  
award it thine,  
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married  
brows.’

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He pressed the blossom of his lips to  
mine,  
And added, ‘ This was cast upon the  
board,  
When all the full-faced presence of the  
Gods  
Ranged in the halls of Peleus ; where-  
upon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom  
’twere due ;  
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,  
Delivering, that to me, by common  
voice  
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the  
cave  
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest  
pine.  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, un-  
heard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris, judge of  
Gods.”

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight ; one silvery  
cloud  
Had lost his way between the piny sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower  
they came,  
Naked they came to that smooth-  
swarded bower, [fire,  
And at their feet the crocus brake like  
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies ; and a wind arose,  
And overhead the wandering ivy and  
vine, [toon  
This way and that, in many a wild fes-  
-ter’d riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
With bunch and berry and flower thro’  
and thro’.

“ O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
And o’er him flow’d a golden cloud, and  
lean’d  
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant  
dew.  
Then first I heard the voice of her to  
whom  
Coming thro’ heaven, like a light that  
grows  
Larger and clearer, with one mind the  
Gods  
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris  
made  
Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
Unquestion’d, overflowing revenue  
Wherewith to embellish state, ‘ from  
many a vale  
And river-sunder’d champaign clothed  
with corn,  
Or labor’d mine undrainable of ore.  
Honor,’ she said, ‘ and homage, tax and  
toll,  
From many an inland town and haven  
large,  
Mast-throng’d beneath her shadowing  
citadel  
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.’

“ O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Still she spake on and still she spake of  
power,  
‘ Which in all action is the end of all ;  
Power fitted to the season : wisdom-bred  
And throned of wisdom—from all neigh-  
bor crowns  
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon  
from me,  
From me, heaven’s queen, Paris, to thee  
king-born,  
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-  
born,  
Should come most welcome, seeing men,  
in power  
Only, are likest Gods, who have attain’d  
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
In knowledge of their own supremacy.’

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She ceased, and Paris held the costly  
fruit  
Out at arm’s-length, so much the thought  
of power  
Flatter’d his spirit ; but Pallas where  
she stood  
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared  
limbs

O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed  
spear  
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
The while, above, her full and earnest  
eye  
Over her snow-cold breast and angry  
cheek  
Kept watch, waiting decision, made re-  
ply:  
'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-  
control,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign  
power.  
Yet not for power (power of herself  
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by  
law,  
Acting the law we live by without fear;  
And, because right is right, to follow  
right  
Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-  
quence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Again she said: 'I woo thee not with  
gifts.  
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,  
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,  
If gazing on divinity disrobed  
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of  
fair,  
Unbias'd by self-profit, O, rest thee sure  
That I shall love thee well and cleave to  
thee,  
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,  
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a  
God's,  
To push thee forward thro' a life of  
shocks,  
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance  
grow  
Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown  
will,  
Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceas'd,  
And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O  
Paris,  
Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,  
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is  
me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in  
Paphian wells,  
With rosy slender fingers backward drew

From her warm brows and bosom her  
deep hair  
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat  
And shoulder; from the violets her light  
foot  
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded  
form  
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches  
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she  
moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,  
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh  
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise  
thee  
The fairest and most loving wife in  
Greece.'  
She spoke and laugh'd; I shut my sight  
for fear;  
But when I look'd, Paris had raised his  
arm,  
And I beheld great Herë's angry eyes,  
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
And I was left alone within the bower;  
And from that time to this I am alone,  
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not  
fair?  
My love hath told me so a thousand  
times.  
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,  
Eyed like the evening star, with playful  
tail  
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most  
loving is she?  
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my  
arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips  
pressed  
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling  
dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as autumn rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They came, they cut away my tallest  
pines,  
My tall dark pines, that plumed the  
craggy ledge  
High over the blue gorge, and all be-  
tween  
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the  
dark morn



The panther's roar came muffled, while  
I sat

Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Enone see the morning mist  
Sweep thro' them; never see them over-  
laid

With narrow moonlit slips of silver  
cloud,

Between the loud stream and the trem-  
bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd  
folds,

Among the fragments tumbled from the  
glens,

Or the dry thickets, I could meet with  
her

The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Pelefan banquet-hall,

And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
And bred this change; that I might

And speak my mind,  
And tell her to her face how much I

hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and  
men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand  
times,

In this green valley, under this green  
hill,

Even on this hand, and sitting on this  
stone?

Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with  
tears?

O happy tears, and how unlike to these!  
O happy heaven, how canst thou see my

face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my

weight? [cloud,  
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating

There are enough unhappy on this earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to

live;  
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.

Thou weighest heavy on the heart with-  
in.

Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts

Do shape themselves within me, more  
and more.

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the

inmost hills,

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born. Her child!—a shudder  
comes

Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O, mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to  
me

Walking the cold and starless road of  
death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and

go  
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come  
forth

Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she  
says

A fire dances before her, and a sound  
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.

What this may be I know not, but I  
know

That wheresoe'er I am by night and day,  
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

1832, 1842.

#### THE SISTERS

WE were two daughters of one race;  
She was the fairest in the face.

The wind is blowing in turret and  
tree.

They were together, and she fell;  
Therefore revenge became me well.

O, the earl was fair to see!

She died; she went to burning flame;  
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.

The wind is howling in turret and tree.  
Whole weeks and months, and early and

late,  
To win his love I lay in wait!

O, the earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bade him come;

I won his love, I brought him home.

The wind is roaring in turret and tree.

And after supper, on a bed,

Upon my lap he laid his head.

O, the earl was fair to see!

I kiss'd his eyelids unto rest.

His ruddy cheek upon my breast.

The wind is raging in turret and tree.

I hated him with the hate of hell,

But I loved his beauty passing well.

O, the earl was fair to see!



I rose up in the silent night;  
I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
The wind is raving in turret and tree.  
As half-asleep his breath he drew,  
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.  
O, the earl was fair to see!

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
He look'd so grand when he was dead.  
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
I wrapped his body in the sheet,  
And laid him at his mother's feet.  
O, the earl was fair to see! 1832.

#### THE PALACE OF ART<sup>1</sup>

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,  
Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd brass,  
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright  
From level meadow-bases of deep grass  
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf  
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
My soul would live alone unto herself  
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round," I said,  
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast shade  
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:  
"Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
In this great mansion, that is built for me.  
So royal-rich and wide."

Four courts I made, East, West and South  
and North,  
In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth  
A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there  
ran a row  
Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 118-131.

Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
Of spouted fountain-floods;

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
That lent broad verge to distant lands.  
Far as the wild swan wings, to where  
the sky  
Dipped down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one  
swell  
Across the mountain stream'd below  
In misty folds, that floating as they fell.  
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd  
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up.  
A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd  
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze  
upon  
My palace with unblinded eyes,  
While this great bow will waver in the  
sun,  
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never  
fail'd,  
And, while day sank or mounted  
higher,  
The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,  
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd  
and traced,  
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires  
From shadow'd grotts of arches inter-  
laced,  
And tipped with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did  
pass,  
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace  
stood,  
All various, each a perfect whole  
From living Nature, fit for every mood  
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green  
and blue,  
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
Where with puff'd cheek the belted  
hunter blew  
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of  
sand,  
And some one pacing there alone,  
Who paced for ever in a glimmering  
land,  
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry  
waves,  
You seem'd to hear them climb and  
fall  
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing  
caves,  
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
By herds upon an endless plain,  
The ragged rims of thunder brooding  
low,  
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.  
In front they bound the sheaves. Be-  
hind  
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,  
And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones  
and slags;  
Beyond, a line of heights; and higher  
All barr'd with long white cloud the  
scornful crags;  
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twi-  
light pour'd  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order  
stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape  
fair,  
As fit for every mood of mind,  
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was  
there  
Not less than truth design'd.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,  
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx  
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
Wound with white roses, slept Saint  
Cecily;  
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise  
A group of Houris bow'd to see  
The dying Islamite, with hands and  
eyes  
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son  
In some fair space of sloping greens  
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian  
king to hear  
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
And many a tract of palm and rice,  
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd  
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-  
clasp'd,  
From off her shoulder backward borne;  
From one hand droop'd a crocus; one  
hand grasp'd  
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh  
Half-buried in the eagle's down,  
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone; but every legend fair  
Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,  
Not less than life, design'd.

Then in the towers I placed great bells  
that swung,  
Moved of themselves, with silver  
sounds;  
And with choice paintings of wise men  
I hung  
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph  
strong,  
Beside him Shakespeare bland and  
mild;  
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd  
his song,  
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;  
A million wrinkles carved his skin;  
A hundred winters snow'd upon his  
breast,  
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
Many an arch high up did lift,  
And angels rising and descending met  
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd  
With cycles of the human tale  
Of this wide world, the times of every  
land  
So wrought they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,  
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and  
stings ;  
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or  
bind  
All force in bonds that might endure,  
And here once more like some sick man  
declined,  
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod ; and those great  
bells  
Began to chime. She took her throne ;  
She sat betwixt the shining oriels,  
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost oriels' colored  
flame  
Two godlike faces gazed below ;  
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Ver-  
ulam,  
The first of those who know.

And all those names that in their motion  
were  
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd  
fair  
In diverse raiment strange ;

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, em-  
erald, blue,  
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,  
And from her lips, as morn from Mem-  
non, drew  
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,  
More than my soul to hear her echo'd  
song  
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful  
mirth,  
Joying to feel herself alive,

Lord over Nature, lord of the visible  
earth,

Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : " All these are  
mine,

And let the world have peace or war,  
'Tis one to me." She—when young  
night divine

Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—  
Lit light in wreaths and anadema,  
And pure quintessences of precious oils  
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapped her hands  
and cried,

" I marvel if my still delight  
In this great house so royal-rich and wide  
Be flatter'd to the height.

" O all things fair to sate my various  
eyes !

O shapes and hues that please me well !  
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,  
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

" O Godlike isolation which art mine,  
I can but count thee perfect gain,  
What time I watch the darkening droves  
of swine  
That range on yonder plain.

" In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient  
skin,

They graze and wallow, breed and  
sleep ;

And oft some brainless devil enters in,  
And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she  
prate

And of the rising from the dead,  
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd  
Fate ;

And at the last she said :

" I take possession of man's mind and  
deed.

I care not what the sects may brawl.  
I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all."

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
Yet not the less held she her solemn  
mirth,  
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd ; so three  
years

She prosper'd ; on the fourth she fell,  
Like Herod, when the shout was in his  
ears,  
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abysmal deeps of personality,  
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she  
turn'd her sight  
The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote, " Mene, mene," and divided quite  
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude  
Fell on her, from which mood was  
born  
Scorn of herself ; again, from out that  
mood  
Laughter at her self-scorn.

" What ! is not this my place of  
strength," she said,  
" My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones  
were laid  
Since my first memory ? "

But in dark corners of her palace stood  
Uncertain shapes ; and unawares  
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears  
of blood,  
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of  
flame,  
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon she  
came,  
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light  
Or power of movement, seem'd my  
soul,  
Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
Making for one sure goal ;

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of  
sand,  
Left on the shore, that hears all night  
The plunging seas draw backward from  
the land  
Their moon led waters white ;

A star that with the choral starry dance  
Join'd not, but stood, and standing  
saw

The hollow orb of moving Circumstance  
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had  
curl'd.

" No voice," she shriek'd in that lone  
hall,

" No voice breaks thro' the stillness of  
this world ;  
One deep, deep silence all ! "

She, mouldering with the dull earth's  
mouldering sod,  
Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,  
Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw, for her despair,  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere ;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt  
round  
With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully  
sound  
Of human footsteps fall ;

As in strange lands a traveller walking  
slow,  
In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moonrise hears the low  
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a  
sound  
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep  
cry  
Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh, " I  
have found  
A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, " I am on fire within.  
There comes no murmur of reply.  
What is it that will take away my sin,  
And save me lest I die ? "

So when four years were wholly  
finished,  
She threw her royal robes away.  
" Make me a cottage in the vale," she  
said,  
" Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers,  
that are  
So lightly, beautifully built;  
Perchance I may return with others  
there  
When I have purged my guilt."  
1882.

### THE LOTOS-EATERS

"COURAGE!" he said, and pointed to-  
ward the land,  
"This mounting wave will roll us shore-  
ward soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land  
In which it seemed always afternoon.  
All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;  
And, like a downward smoke, the slender  
stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall  
did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a down-  
ward smoke,  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,  
did go;  
And some thro' wavering lights and  
shadows broke,  
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.  
They saw the gleaming river seaward  
flow  
From the inner land; far off, three  
mountain-tops,  
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd; and, dew'd with  
showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the  
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West; thro' mountain clefts  
the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding  
vale  
And meadow, set with slender galin-  
gale;  
A land where all things always seem'd  
the same!  
And round about the keel with faces  
pale,  
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters  
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted  
stem,  
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof  
they gave  
To each, but whoso did receive of them  
And taste, to him the gushing of the  
wave  
Far far away did seem to mourn and  
rave  
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,  
His voice was thin, as voices from the  
grave;  
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,  
And music in his ears his beating heart  
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow  
sand,  
Between the sun and moon upon the  
shore;  
And sweet it was to dream of Father-  
land,  
Of child, and wife and slave; but ever-  
more  
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the  
oar,  
Weary the wandering fields of barren  
foam.  
Then some one said, "We will return no  
more;"  
And all at once they sang, "Our island  
home  
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer  
roam."

### CHORIC SONG

#### I

THERE is sweet music here that softer  
falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the  
grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between  
walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentler on the spirit lies,  
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from  
the blissful skies.  
Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved  
flowers weep,  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy  
hangs in sleep.

#### II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heavi-  
ness,

And utterly consumed with sharp distress,  
While all things else have rest from weariness?  
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of things,  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;  
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
"There is no joy but calm!"—  
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

## III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.  
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,  
Drops in a silent autumn night.  
All its allotted length of days  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,  
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
Death is the end of life; ah, why  
Should life all labor be?  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last?  
All things are taken from us, and become  
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have  
To war with evil? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave

In silence—ripen, fall, and cease:  
Give us long rest or death, dark death,  
or dreamful ease.

## V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream!  
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;  
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
Eating the Lotus day by day,  
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;  
To muse and brood and live again in memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

## VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives  
And their warm tears; but all hath suffer'd change;  
For surely now our household hearths are cold,  
Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings  
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.  
Is there confusion in the little isle?  
Let what is broken so remain.  
The Gods are hard to reconcile;  
'T is hard to settle order once again.  
There is confusion worse than death,  
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
Long labor unto aged breath,  
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars  
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

## VII

But, propped on beds of amaranth and  
moly,  
How sweet—while warm airs lull us,  
blowing lowly—  
With half-dropped eyelid still,  
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
To watch the long bright river drawing  
slowly  
His waters from the purple hill—  
To hear the dewy echoes calling  
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined  
vine—  
To watch the emerald-color'd water fall-  
ing  
Thro' many a woven scanthus-wreath  
divine !  
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling  
brine,  
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
beneath the pine.

## VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak,  
The Lotos blows by every winding  
creek ;  
All day the wind breathes low with mel-  
lower tone ;  
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
Round and round the spicy downs the  
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.  
We have had enough of action, and of  
motion we,  
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
when the surge was seething free,  
Where the wallowing monster spouted  
his foam-fountains in the sea.  
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with  
an equal mind,  
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie  
reclined  
On the hills like Gods together, careless  
of mankind.  
For they lie beside their nectar, and the  
bolts are hurl'd  
Far below them in the valleys, and the  
clouds are lightly curl'd  
Round their golden houses, girdled with  
the gleaming world ;  
Where they smile in secret, looking over  
wasted lands,  
Blight and famine, plague and earth-  
quake, roaring deeps and fiery  
sands,  
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and  
sinking ships, and praying hands.  
But they smile, they find a music cen-  
tered in a doleful song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an an-  
cient tale of wrong,  
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the  
words are strong ;  
Chanted from an ill-used race of men  
that cleave the soil,  
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with  
enduring toil,  
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and  
wine and oil ;  
Till they perish and they suffer—some,  
't is whisper'd—down in hell  
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian  
valleys dwell,  
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of  
asphodel.  
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet  
than toil, the shore  
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind  
and wave and oar ;  
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not  
wander more. 1832, 1842.

## A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

I READ, before my eyelids dropped their  
shade,  
“ *The Legend of Good Women*,” long  
ago  
Sung by the morning star of song, who  
made  
His music heard below ;  
Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose  
sweet breath  
Preluded those melodious bursts that  
fill  
The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
With sounds that echo still.  
And, for a while, the knowledge of his  
art  
Held me above the subject, as strong  
gales  
Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'  
my heart,  
Brimful of those wild tales,  
Charged both mine eyes with tears. In  
every land  
I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
Beauty and anguish walking hand in  
hand  
The downward slope to death.  
Those far-renowned brides of ancient  
song  
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning  
stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame,  
and wrong,  
And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clang-  
ing hoofs ;  
And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-  
aries,  
And forms that pass'd at windows and  
on roofs  
Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold, heroes tall  
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet  
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall,  
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with  
heated blasts  
That run before the fluttering tongues  
of fire ;  
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and  
masts,  
And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen  
plates,  
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers  
woes,  
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron  
grates,  
And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when  
to land  
Bluster the winds and tides the self-  
same way,  
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level  
sand,  
Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
Resolved on noble things, and strove  
to speak,  
As when a great thought strikes along  
the brain  
And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;  
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing  
thought  
Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and  
did creep  
Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,  
and brought  
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd  
far  
In an old wood ; fresh-wash'd in coolest  
dew  
The maiden splendors of the morning  
star  
Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree boles did stoop and  
lean  
Upon the dusky brushwood under-  
neath  
Their broad curved branches, fledged  
with clearest green,  
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red Morn had died, her journey  
done,  
And with dead lips smiled at the  
twilight plain,  
Half-fallen across the threshold of the  
sun,  
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead  
air,  
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;  
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jas-  
mine turn'd  
Their humid arms festooning tree to  
tree,  
And at the root thro' lush green grasses  
burn'd  
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I  
knew  
The tearful glimmer of the languid  
dawn  
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks  
drench'd in dew,  
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
Pour'd back into my empty soul and  
frame  
The times when I remember to have been  
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear undertone  
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unbliss-  
ful clime, [own  
" Pass freely thro' ; the wood is all thine  
Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,  
Still than chisell'd marble, standing  
there ;



A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with  
surprise

Froze my swift speech; she turning  
on my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
Spoke slowly in her place:

"I had great beauty; ask thou not my  
name: [tiny.

No one can be more wise than des-  
Many drew swords and died. Where'er  
I came  
I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair  
field

Myself for such a face had boldly  
died."

I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd  
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks  
averse,

To her full height her stately stature  
draws:

"My youth," she said, "was blasted  
with a curse:

This woman was the cause.

"I was cut off from hope in that sad  
place

Which men call'd Aulis in those iron  
years:

My father held his hand upon his face;  
I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was  
thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry

The stern black-bearded kings with  
wolfish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay  
afloat;

The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and  
the shore:

The bright death quiver'd at the victim's  
throat—

Touch'd—and I knew no more."

Whereto the other with a downward  
brow:

"I would the white cold heavy-  
plunging foam.

Whirled by the wind, had roll'd me  
deep below.

Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the si-  
lence drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping  
sea:

Sudden I heard a voice that cried

"Come here,

That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
One sitting on a crimson scarf un-  
roll'd;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold

black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, be-  
gan:

"I govern'd men by change, and so I  
sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen  
a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood  
According to my humor ebb and flow.

I have no men to govern in this wood:

That makes my only woe.

"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could  
not bend

One will; nor tame and tutor with  
mine eye

That dull cold-blooded Caesar. Prythee,  
friend,

Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode  
sublime

On Fortune's neck; we sat as God by  
God:

The Nilus would have risen before his  
time

And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and  
lit

Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O,  
my life

In Egypt! O, the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

"And the wild kiss, when fresh from  
war's alarms,

My Hercules, my Roman Antony,

My mailed Bacchus leaped into my arms,  
Contented there to die!

"And there he died: and when I heard  
my name

Sigh'd forth with life, I would not  
brook my fear

Of the other ; with a worm I balk'd his  
fame.

What else was left ? look here !"—

With that she tore her robe apart, and  
half

The polish'd argent of her breast to  
sight

Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a  
laugh,

Showing the aspic's bite.—

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier  
found

Me lying dead, my crown about my  
brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and  
crown'd

Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest  
range

Struck by all passion, did fall down  
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all  
change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for  
delight ;

Because with sudden motion from the  
ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd  
with light

The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest  
darts :

As once they drew into two burning  
rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty  
hearts

Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard  
A noise of some one coming thro' the  
lawn,

And singing clearer than the crested bird  
That claps his wings at dawn :

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
From craggy hollows pouring, late and  
soon,

Sound all night long, in falling thro' the  
dell,

Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with  
beams divine ;

All night the splinter'd crags that wall  
the dell

With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sun-  
shine laves

The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the  
door

Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd  
and tied

To where he stands,—so stood I, when  
that flow

Of music left the lips of her that died  
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
A maiden pure ; as when she went along

From Mizpah's tower'd gate with wel-  
come light.

With timbrel and with song.

My words leaped forth : "Heaven heads  
the count of crimes

With that wild oath." She render'd  
answer high :

"Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand  
times

I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant,  
whose root

Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-  
neath,

Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to  
fruit

Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father—these  
did move

Me from my bliss of life that Nature  
gave,

Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of  
love

Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair  
Hebrew boy

Shall smile away my maiden blame  
among

The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of all  
joy,

Leaving the dance and song,

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
Leaving the promise of my bridal

bower, [glow

The valleys of grape-loaded vines that

Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us.  
 Anon  
 We heard the lion roaring from his  
 den;  
 We saw the large white stars rise one  
 by one,  
 Or, from the darken'd glen,

"Saw God divide the night with flying  
 flame,  
 And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
 I heard Him, for He spake, and grief be-  
 came  
 A solemn scorn of ills.

"When the next moon was roll'd into  
 the sky,  
 Strength came to me that equall'd my  
 desire.  
 How beautiful a thing it was to die  
 For God and for my sire!

"It comforts me in this one thought to  
 dwell,  
 That I subdued me to my father's will;  
 Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,  
 Sweetens the spirit still.

"Moreover it is written that my race  
 Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
 Arœr  
 On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her face  
 Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips; she left me where  
 I stood:  
 "Glory to God," she sang, and past  
 afar,  
 Thridding the sombre boskage of the  
 wood,  
 Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
 As one that from a casement leans his  
 head,  
 When midnight bells cease ringing sud-  
 denly,  
 And the old year is dead.

"Alas! alas!" a low voice, full of care,  
 Murmur'd beside me: "Turn and look  
 on me:  
 I am that Rosamond, whom men call  
 fair.  
 If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden coarse  
 and poor!  
 O me, that I should ever see the light!  
 Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
 Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and  
 trust;  
 To whom the Egyptian: "O, you  
 tamely died!  
 You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,  
 and thrust  
 The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white dawn's  
 creeping beams,  
 Stolen to my brain, dissolved the my-  
 tery  
 Of folded sleep. The captain of my  
 dreams  
 Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the  
 dark  
 Ere I saw her who clasp'd in her last  
 trance  
 Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of  
 Arc,  
 A light of ancient France;

Or her who knew that Love can vanquish  
 Death.  
 Who kneeling, with one arm about her  
 king,  
 Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
 breath,  
 Sweet as new buds in spring.

No memory labors longer from the deep  
 Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
 hidden ore  
 That glimpses, moving up, than I from  
 sleep  
 To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what  
 dull pain  
 Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
 strike  
 Into that wondrous track of dreams  
 again!  
 But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath  
 been blest.  
 Desiring what is mingled with past  
 years,  
 In yearnings that can never be expressed  
 By signs or groans or tears;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with  
 choicest art.  
 Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,  
 Wither beneath the palate, and the heart  
 Faints, faded by its heat. 1832.

SAINT AGNES' EVE

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon ;  
My breath to heaven like vapor goes ;  
May my soul follow soon !  
The shadows of the convent-towers  
Slant down the snowy sward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours  
That lead me to my Lord.  
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,  
To yonder shining ground ;  
As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
To yonder argent round ;  
So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
My spirit before Thee ;  
So in mine earthly house I am,  
To that I hope to be.  
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,  
Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ;  
The flashes come and go ;  
All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
And strows her lights below,  
And deepens on and up ! the gates  
Roll back, and far within  
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,  
To make me pure of sin.  
The Sabbaths of Eternity,  
One Sabbath deep and wide—  
A light upon the shining sea—  
The Bridegroom with his bride !  
1837.

YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT  
EASE

YOU ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
Within this region I subsist,  
Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
And languish for the purple seas.  
It is the land that freemen till,  
That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
The land, where girt with friends or  
foes  
A man may speak the thing he will ;  
A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown,  
Where Freedom slowly broadens down  
From precedent to precedent ;

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
But, by degrees to fullness wrought,  
The strength of some diffusive thought  
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
Opinions, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil crime,  
And individual freedom mute,

Tho' power should make from land to  
land  
The name of Britain trebly great—  
Tho' every channel of the State  
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,  
Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die  
The palms and temples of the South.  
1833. 1842.

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE  
HEIGHTS

OF old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet ;  
Above her shook the starry lights ;  
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
But fragments of her mighty voice  
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stepped she down thro' town and  
field  
To mingle with the human race,  
And part by part to men reveal'd  
The fulness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
From her isle-altar gazing down,  
Who, Godlike, grasps the triple forks,  
And, king-like, wears the crown.

Her open eyes desire the truth.  
The wisdom of a thousand years  
Is in them. May perpetual youth  
Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and  
shine,  
Make bright our days and light our  
dreams,  
Turning to scorn with lips divine  
The falsehood of extremes !  
1833. 1842.

## LOVE THOU THY LAND

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-  
brought  
From out the storied past, and used  
Within the present, but transfused  
Thro' future time by power of thought ;

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen, friends,  
Thy brothers, and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble  
wings  
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for  
day,  
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;  
But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
Before her to whatever sky  
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the  
years :  
Cut Prejudice against the grain.  
But gentle words are always gain ;  
Regard the weakness of thy peers.

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise—  
It grows to guerdon after-days.  
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch ;

Not clinging to some ancient saw,  
Not master'd by some modern term,  
Not swift nor slow to change, but  
firm ;

And in its season bring the law,  
That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life that, working strongly,  
binds—

Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
Our being, lest we rust in ease.

We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that which  
flies,

And work, a joint of state, that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying hard to shape in act ;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Even now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school ;  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour.  
But vague in vapor, hard to mark ;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head ;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

O, yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud.  
Must ever shock, like armed foes.  
And this be true, till Time shall close  
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt.  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like  
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and  
word,

Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,  
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that  
broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes ;  
And if some dreadful need should rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke.

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead ;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

1833. 1842.

### MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter sea,  
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,  
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their lord,  
King Arthur ; then, because his wound  
was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.  
On one side lay the ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was  
full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere :

" The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous  
knights

Whereof this world holds record. Such  
a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think  
that we

Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly  
deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.

I perish by this people which I made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come  
again

To rule once more—but let what will be  
be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till  
morn.

Thou therefore take my brand Excali-  
bur,

Which was my pride ; for thou remem-  
berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an  
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,

Holding the sword — and how I row'd  
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a  
king ;

And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known.  
But now delay not ; take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle mere ;  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly  
bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :  
" It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee  
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the  
helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded  
man.

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee  
word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he  
stept

And in the moon athwart the place of  
tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient  
men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind  
sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,  
stepping down

By zigzag paths and juts of pointed rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Exca-  
libur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter  
moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,  
ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against  
the hilt ;

For all the haft twinkled with diamond  
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth  
work

Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he  
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift  
mind,

In act to throw ; but at the last it seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd

There in the many-knotted water-flags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the  
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded  
king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere : [I gave ?

" Hast thou perform'd my mission which

What is it thou hast seen, or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd  
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight;  
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.  
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing

I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,  
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,  
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,  
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand

An act unprofitable, against himself?

The king is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord  
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath  
And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'

So might some old man speak in the aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence;  
But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the wounded king.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen, or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!  
Authority forgets a dying king.

Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all,  
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence;

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,  
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur ;  
 But ere he dipped the surface, rose an arm  
 Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonder-  
 ful,  
 And caught him by the hilt, and brand-  
 ish'd him  
 Three times, and drew him under in the  
 mere.  
 And lightly went the other to the king.  
 Then spoke King Arthur, drawing  
 thicker breath :  
 " Now see I by thine eyes that this is  
 done.  
 Speak out ; what is it thou hast heard,  
 or seen ?"  
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere :  
 " Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest  
 the gems  
 Should blind my purpose, for I never  
 saw,  
 Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I  
 die,  
 Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,  
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt.  
 Then with both hands I flung him,  
 wheeling him ;  
 But when I look'd again, behold an arm,  
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-  
 ful,  
 That caught him by the hilt, and brand-  
 ish'd him  
 Three times, and drew him under in  
 the mere."  
 And answer made King Arthur,  
 breathing hard :  
 " My end draws nigh ; 't is time that I  
 were gone.  
 Make broad thy shoulders to receive my  
 weight,  
 And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear  
 My wound hath taken cold, and I shall  
 die."  
 So saying, from the pavement he half  
 rose,  
 Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,  
 And looking wistfully with wide blue  
 eyes  
 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
 Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,  
 And would have spoken, but he found  
 not words,  
 Then took with care, and kneeling on  
 one knee,  
 O'er both his shoulders drew the languid  
 hands,  
 And rising bore him thro' the place of  
 tombs. [hard,  
 But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted

Like one that feels a nightmare on his  
 bed  
 When all the house is mute. So sigh'd  
 the king,  
 Muttering and murmuring at his ear,  
 " Quick, quick !  
 I fear it is too late, and I shall die."  
 But the other swiftly strode from ridge  
 to ridge,  
 Clothed with his breath, and looking, as  
 he walk'd,  
 Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
 He heard the deep behind him, and a  
 cry  
 Before. His own thought drove him  
 like a goad.  
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves  
 And barren chasms, and all to left and  
 right  
 The bare black cliff clang'd round him,  
 as he based  
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that  
 rang  
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed  
 heels—  
 And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
 And the long glories of the winter moon.  
 Then saw they how there hove a dusky  
 barge,  
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
 stern,  
 Beneath them ; and descending they  
 were ware  
 That all the decks were dense with stately  
 forms  
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream  
 —by these  
 Three queens with crowns of gold—and  
 from them rose  
 A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
 And, as it were one voice, an agony  
 Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills  
 All night in a waste land, where no one  
 comes,  
 Or hath come, since the making of the  
 world.  
 Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me  
 in the barge,"  
 And to the barge they came. There  
 those three queens  
 Put forth their hands, and took the king,  
 and wept.  
 But she that rose the tallest of them  
 all  
 And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
 chafed his hands,  
 And call'd him by his name, complaining  
 loud,



And dropping bitter tears against his  
brow  
Striped with dark blood; for all his face  
was white  
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing  
east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous  
curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd  
with dust;  
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the king;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in  
rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.  
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I  
go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my  
eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are  
dead,  
When every morning brought a noble  
chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.  
Such times have been not since the light  
that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dis-  
solved  
Which was an image of the mighty  
world;  
And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and the  
years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds."  
And slowly answer'd Arthur from the  
barge:  
"The old order changeth, yielding place  
to new,  
And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the  
world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in  
me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I  
have done [thou.  
May He within himself make pure! but

If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,  
let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.  
For what are men better than sheep or  
goats  
That nourish a blind life within the  
brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of  
prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call  
them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every  
way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of  
God.  
But now farewell. I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—  
For all my mind is clouded with a  
doubt—  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly, but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with  
orchard lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound."  
So said he, and the barge with oar and  
sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plumage, and takes  
the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge  
of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away.  
1834. 1842. 1869.<sup>1</sup>

DORA <sup>2</sup>

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora. William was his son,  
And she his niece. He often look'd at  
them  
And often thought, "I'll make them  
man and wife."

<sup>1</sup> In 1869 the *Morte d'Arthur* was incorporated  
in the *Passing of Arthur*, the last of the *Idylls of  
the King*.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 195-6, and 235.

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,  
And yearn'd toward William; but the  
youth, because  
He had always been with her in the  
house,  
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day  
When Allan call'd his son, and said:

"My son,  
I married late, but I would wish to see  
My grandchild on my knees before I die;  
And I have set my heart upon a match.  
Now therefore look to Dora; she is well  
To look to; thrifty too beyond her age.  
She is my brother's daughter; he and I  
Had once hard words, and parted, and  
he died

In foreign lands; but for his sake I bred  
His daughter Dora. Take her for your  
wife;

For I have wish'd this marriage night  
and day,

For many years." But William an-  
swered short:

"I cannot marry Dora; by my life,  
I will not marry Dora!" Then the old  
man

Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,  
and said:

"You will not, boy! you dare to answer  
thus!

But in my time a father's word was law,  
And so it shall be now for me. Look to  
it;

Consider, William, take a month to  
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish,  
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall  
pack,

And never more darken my doors again."  
But William answer'd madly, bit his lips,  
And broke away. The more he look'd at  
her

The less he liked her; and his ways  
were harsh;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then be-  
fore

The month was out he left his father's  
house.

And hired himself to work within the  
fields;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd  
and wed

A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,  
Allan call'd

His niece and said: "My girl, I love you  
well;

But if you speak with him that was my

Or change a word with her he calls his  
wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is  
law."

And Dora promised, being meek. She  
thought,

"It cannot be; my uncle's mind will  
change!"

And days went on, and there was born  
a boy

To William; then distresses came on  
him,

And day by day he passed his father's  
gate,

Heart-broken, and his father helped  
him not.

But Dora stored what little she could  
save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did  
they know

Who sent it; till at last a fever seized  
On William, and in harvest time he  
died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat  
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and  
thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and  
said:

"I have obey'd my uncle until now,  
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'

me

This evil came on William at the first.  
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's

gone,

And for your sake, the woman that he  
chose,

And for this orphan, I am come to you.  
You know there has not been for these

five years

So full a harvest. Let me take the boy,  
And I will set him in my uncle's eye

Among the wheat; that when his heart  
is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,  
And bless him for the sake of him  
that's gone."

And Dora took the child, and went  
her way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound  
That was unsown, where many poppies

grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field  
And spied her not, for none of all his  
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the  
child;

And Dora would have risen and gone to  
him,

But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose and took

The child once more, and sat upon the mound ;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers

That grew about, and tied it round his hat

To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.

Then when the farmer pass'd into the field

He spied her, and he left his men at work,

And came and said : " Where were you yesterday ?

Whose child is that ? What are you doing here ? "

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground, And answer'd softly, " This is William's child ! "

" And did I not," said Allan, " did I not forbid you, Dora ? " Dora said again :

" Do with me as you will, but take the child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's gone ! "

And Allan said : " I see it is a trick Got up betwixt you and the woman there.

I must be taught my duty, and by you ! You knew my word was law, and yet you dared

To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy ;

But go you hence, and never see me more."

So saying, he took the boy that cried aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the field

More and more distant. She bow'd down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,

And all the things that had been. She bow'd down

And wept in secret ; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy

Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise

To God, that help'd her in her widow-hood.

And Dora said : " My uncle took the boy ;

But, Mary, let me live and work with you :

He says that he will never see me more."

Then answer'd Mary : " This shall never be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself ;

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to slight

His mother. Therefore thou and I will go,

And I will have my boy, and bring him home ;

And I will beg of him to take thee back. But if he will not take thee back again,

Then thou and I will live within one house,

And work for William's child, until he grows

Of age to help us."

So the women kiss'd Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm.

The door was off the latch ; they peep'd, and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,

And clapped him on the hands and on the cheeks,

Like one that loved him ; and the lad stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that hung

From Allan's watch and sparkled by the fire.

Then they came in ; but when the boy beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to her ; And Allan set him down, and Mary said :

" O father !—if you let me call you so—

I never came a-begging for myself, Or William, or this child ; but now I come

For Dora : take her back, she loves you well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at peace

With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he  
 said,  
 He could not ever rue his marrying me—  
 I had been a patient wife ; but, Sir, he  
 said  
 That he was wrong to cross his father  
 thus.  
 'God bless him !' he said, 'and may he  
 never know  
 The troubles I have gone thro' !' Then  
 he turn'd  
 His face and pass'd—unhappy that I  
 am !  
 But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for  
 you  
 Will make him hard, and he will learn  
 to slight  
 His father's memory ; and take Dora  
 back,  
 And let all this be as it was before."  
 So Mary said, and Dora hid her face  
 By Mary. There was silence in the  
 room ;  
 And all at once the old man burst in  
 sobs :  
 "I have been to blame—to blame. I  
 have kill'd my son.  
 I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my  
 dear son.  
 May God forgive me !—I have been to  
 blame.  
 Kiss me, my children."  
 Then they clung about  
 The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many  
 times.  
 And all the man was broken with re-  
 morse ;  
 And all his love came back a hundred-  
 fold ;  
 And for three hours he sobb'd o'er  
 William's child  
 Thinking of William.

So those four abode  
 Within one house together, and as years  
 Went forward Mary took another mate ;  
 But Dora lived unmarried till her death.  
*About 1836. 1842.*

#### ULYSSES<sup>1</sup>

It little profits that an idle king,  
 By this still hearth, among these barren  
 crags,  
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and  
 dole  
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and  
 know not me.

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson, I, 196.

I cannot rest from travel ; I will drink  
 Life to the lees. All times I have en-  
 joy'd  
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with  
 those  
 That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and  
 when  
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
 Vext the dim sea. I am become a name ;  
 For always roaming with a hungry heart  
 Much have I seen and known,—cities of  
 men  
 And manners, climates, councils,  
 governments,  
 Myself not least, but honor'd of them  
 all,—  
 And drunk delight of battle with my  
 peers,  
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
 I am a part of all that I have met ;  
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'  
 Gleams that untravell'd world whose  
 margin fades  
 For ever and for ever when I move.  
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !  
 As tho' to breathe were life ! Life piled  
 on life  
 Were all too little, and of one to me  
 Little remains ; but every hour is saved  
 From that eternal silence, something  
 more,  
 A bringer of new things : and vile it were  
 For some three suns to store and hoard  
 myself,  
 And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
 Beyond the utmost bound of human  
 thought.  
 This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the  
 isle,—  
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labor, by slow prudence to make  
 mild  
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the  
 sphere  
 Of common duties decent, not to fail  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work, I  
 mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her  
 sail ;  
 There gloom the dark, broad seas. My  
 mariners,

Souls that have toil'd and wrought, and  
 thought with me,—  
 That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
 Free hearts, free foreheads,—you and I  
 are old ;  
 Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.  
 Death closes all ; but something ere the  
 end,  
 Some work of noble note, may yet be  
 done,  
 Not unbecoming men that strove with  
 Gods.  
 The lights begin to twinkle from the  
 rocks ;  
 The long day wanes ; the slow moon  
 climbs ; the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. Come,  
 my friends  
 not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Turn off, and sitting well in order smite  
 sounding furrows ; for my purpose  
 holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.  
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us  
 down ;  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy  
 Isles, [knew.  
 And see the great Achilles whom we  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and  
 tho' [old days  
 We are not now that strength which in  
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we  
 are, we are,—  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong  
 in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to  
 yield. 1842.

#### LOCKSLEY HALL <sup>1</sup>

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while  
 as yet 't is early morn ;  
 Leave me here, and when you want me,  
 sound upon the bugle-horn.  
 'T is the place, and all around it, as of  
 old, the curlews call,  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland fly-  
 ing over Locksley Hall ;  
 Locksley Hall, that in the distance  
 overlooks the sandy tracts,  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring  
 into cataracts.

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson, I, 176 and 195.

Many a night from yonder ivied case-  
 ment, ere I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly  
 to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising  
 thro' the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled  
 in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nour-  
 ishing a youth sublime  
 With the fairy tales of science, and the  
 long result of time ;

When the centuries behind me like a  
 fruitful land reposed ;  
 When I clung to all the present for the  
 promise that it closed ;

When I dipped into the future far as hu-  
 man eye could see,  
 Saw the vision of the world and all the  
 wonder that would be.—

In the spring a fuller crimson comes  
 upon the robin's breast ;  
 In the spring the wanton lapwing gets  
 himself another crest ;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on  
 the burnish'd dove ;  
 In the spring a young man's fancy light-  
 ly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner  
 than should be for one so young,  
 And her eyes on all my motions with a  
 mute observance hung.

And I said, " My cousin Amy, speak,  
 and speak the truth to me,  
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my  
 being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a  
 color and a light,  
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in  
 the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with  
 a sudden storm of sighs—  
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the  
 dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, " I have hid my feelings, fear-  
 ing they should do me wrong ;"  
 Saying, " Dost thou love me, cousin ?"  
 weeping, " I have loved thee  
 long."

Love took up the glass of time, and  
turn'd it in his glowing hands ;  
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself  
in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote  
on all the chords with might ;  
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,  
past in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we  
hear the copses ring,  
And her whisper throng'd my pulses  
with the fulness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we  
watch the stately ships,  
And our spirits rush'd together at the  
touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my  
Amy, mine no more !  
O the dreary, dreary, moorland ! O the  
barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser  
than all songs have sung,  
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile  
to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ? having  
known me—to decline  
On a range of lower feelings and a nar-  
rower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be ; thou shalt lower to his  
level day by day,  
What is fine within thee growing coarse  
to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is ; thou art  
mated with a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will  
have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall  
have spent its novel force,  
Something better than his dog, a little  
dearer than his horse.

What is this ? his eyes are heavy ; think  
not they are glazed with wine.  
Go to him, it is thy duty ; kiss him,  
take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain  
is overwrought ;  
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch  
him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy  
things to understand—  
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I  
slew thee with my hand !

Better thou and I were lying, hidden  
from the heart's disgrace,  
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent  
in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin  
against the strength of youth !  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us  
from the living truth !

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from  
honest Nature's rule !  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the  
straiten'd forehead of the fool !

Well—'t is well that I should bluster !—  
Hadst thou less unworthy proved—  
Would to God—for I had loved thee  
more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that  
which bears but bitter fruit ?  
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my  
heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such  
length of years should come  
As the many-winter'd crow that leads  
the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort ? in division of the  
records of the mind ?  
Can I part her from herself, and love her,  
as I knew her, kind ?

I remember one that perish'd ; sweetly  
did she speak and move ;  
Such a one do I remember, whom to look  
at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her  
for the love she bore ?  
No—she never loved me truly ; love is  
love for evermore.

Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this  
is truth the poet sings,  
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is re-  
membering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it,  
lest thy heart be put to proof,  
In the dead unhappy night, and when  
the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and  
thou art staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers,  
and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee,  
pointing to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the  
tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never,"  
whisper'd by the phantom years,  
And a song from out the distance in the  
ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking an-  
cient kindness on thy pain.  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get  
thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for  
a tender voice will cry.  
'T is a purer life than thine, a lip to drain  
thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest  
rival brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me  
from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with  
a dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his; it will be  
worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy  
petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching  
down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feel-  
ings—she herself was not exempt—  
Truly, she herself had suffer'd"—Perish  
in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! where-  
fore should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I  
wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to,  
lighting upon days like these?  
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens  
but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all  
the markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy; what is that  
which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on  
the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and  
the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the  
hurt that Honor feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snar-  
ling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn  
that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou  
wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I  
felt before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and  
the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that  
the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he  
leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway  
near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring  
like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be  
gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in  
among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever  
reaping something new;  
That which they have done but earnest  
of the things that they shall do.

For I dipped into the future, far as human  
eye could see.  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the  
wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, ar-  
gosies of magic sails,  
Pilot of the purple twilight, dropping  
down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and  
there rain'd a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling  
in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the  
south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plung-  
ing thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer,  
and the battle-flags were furl'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federa-  
tion of the world.

There the common sense of most shall  
hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber,  
lapped in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping  
thro' me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left  
me with the jaundiced eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things  
here are out of joint.  
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creep-  
ing on from point to point ;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion,  
creeping nigher,  
Glares at one that nods and winks be-  
hind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one in-  
creasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd  
with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not har-  
vest of his youthful joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for  
ever like a boy's ?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,  
and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the  
world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,  
and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward  
the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me,  
sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were  
a target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on  
such a moulder'd string ?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have  
loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness !  
woman's pleasure, woman's pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions  
bounded in a shallower brain.

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy  
passions, match'd with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as  
water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens,  
nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where  
my life began to beat,

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my  
father evil-starr'd ;—  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a  
selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to  
wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gate-  
ways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow  
moons and happy skies,  
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in  
cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an  
European flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland,  
swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower,  
hangs the heavy-fruited tree—  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-  
purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment  
more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the  
thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer  
shall have scope and breathing  
space ;  
I will take some savage woman, she  
shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall  
dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and  
hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap  
the rainbows of the brooka.  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over  
miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I  
*know* my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower  
than the Christian child.



I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant  
of our glorious gains,  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a  
beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to  
me were sun or clime!

I the heir of all the ages, in the fore-  
most files of time—

I that rather held it better men should  
perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like  
Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. For-  
ward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down  
the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep  
into the younger day;  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle  
of Cathay.

Mother-Age,—for mine I knew not,—  
help me as when life begun;  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash  
the lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit  
hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro'  
all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long fare-  
well to Locksley Hall!  
Now for me the woods may wither, now  
for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, black-  
ening over heath and holt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its  
breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or  
hail, or fire or snow;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring sea-  
ward, and I go. 1842.

#### GODIVA

*I waited for the train at Coventry;  
I hung with grooms and porters on the  
bridge,  
To watch the three tall spires; and there  
I shaped  
The city's ancient legend into this:—  
Not only we, the latest seed of Time,  
New men, that in the flying of a wheel*

Cry down the past, not only we, that  
prate

Of rights and wrongs, have loved the  
people well,

And loathed to see them overtax'd; but  
she

Did more, and underwent, and over-  
came,

The woman of a thousand summers back.  
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who  
ruled

In Coventry; for when he laid a tax  
Upon his town, and all the mothers  
brought

Their children, clamoring, "If we pay,  
we starve!"

She sought her lord, and found him,  
where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,  
His beard a foot before him, and his hair  
A yard behind. She told him of their

tears,  
And pray'd him, "If they pay this tax  
they starve."

Whereat he stared, replying, half-  
amazed,

"You would not let your little finger  
ache

For such as *these*?"—"But I would die,"  
said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by  
Paul,

Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear:  
"O, ay, ay, ay, you talk!"—"Alas!"

she said,

"But prove me what it is I would not  
do."

And from a heart as rough as Esau's  
hand,

He answer'd, "Ride you naked thro' the  
town,

And I repeal it;" and nodding, as in  
scorn,

He parted, with great strides among his  
dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,  
As winds from all the compass shift and  
blow,

Made war upon each other for an hour,  
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,

And bade him cry, with sound of trum-  
pet, all

The hard condition, but that she would  
loose

The people; therefore, as they loved her  
well,

From then till noon no foot should pace  
the street,

No eye look down, she passing, but that

Should keep within, door shut, and win-  
dow barr'd.  
Then fled she to her inmost bower, and  
there  
Unclass'd the wedded eagles of her belt,  
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a  
breath  
She linger'd, looking like a summer  
moon  
Half-dipped in cloud. Anon she shook  
her head,  
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her  
knee;  
Unclad herself in haste; adown the  
stair  
Stole on; and like a creeping sunbeam  
slid  
From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd  
The gateway: there she found her pal-  
frey trap  
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.  
Then she rode forth, clothed on with  
chastity.  
The deep air listen'd round her as she  
rode,  
And all the low wind hardly breathed  
for fear.  
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the  
spout  
Had cunning eyes to see; the barking  
cur  
Made her cheek flame; her palfrey's  
footfall shot  
Light horrors thro' her pulses; the blind  
walls  
Were full of chinks and holes; and over-  
head  
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared;  
but she  
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she  
saw  
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from  
the field  
Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the  
wall.  
Then she rode back, clothed on with  
chastity.  
And one low churl, compact of thankless  
earth,  
The fatal byword of all years to come,  
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,  
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had  
their will,  
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his  
head, [who wait  
And dropped before him. So the Powers,  
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis-  
used; [at once,  
And she, that knew not, pass'd; and all

With twelve great shocks of sound, the  
shameless noon [dred towers,  
Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hun-  
One after one; but even then she gain'd  
Her bower, whence reissuing, robed and  
crown'd,  
To meet her lord, she took the tax away  
And built herself an everlasting name.  
1842.

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.  
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,  
The horse and rider reel;  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And when the tide of combat stands,  
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favors fall!  
For them I battle till the end,  
To save from shame and thrall;  
But all my heart is drawn above,  
My knees are bow'd in crypt and  
shrine;  
I never felt the kiss of love,  
Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
Me mightier transports move and  
thrill;  
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
A light before me swims,  
Between dark stems the forest glows,  
I hear a noise of hymns.  
Then by some secret shrine I ride;  
I hear a voice, but none are there;  
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
The tapers burning fair.  
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
I find a magic bark.  
I leap on board; no helmsman steers;  
I float till all is dark.  
A gentle sound, an awful light!  
Three angels bear the Holy Grail;

With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail.  
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!  
My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
As down dark tides the glory slides,  
And starlike mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
The streets are dumb with snow.  
The tempest crackles on the leads,  
And, ringing, springs from brand and  
mail;

But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
And gilds the driving hail.  
I leave the plain, I climb the height;  
No branchy thicket shelter yields;  
But blessed forms in whistling storms  
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given  
Such hope, I know not fear;  
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
That often meet me here.  
I muse on joy that will not cease,  
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
Whose odors haunt my dreams;  
And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
This mortal armor that I wear,  
This weight and size, this heart and  
eyes,  
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
And thro' the mountain-walls  
A rolling organ-harmony  
Swells up and shakes and falls.  
Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:  
"O just and faithful knight of God!  
Ride on! the prize is near."  
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;  
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
Until I find the Holy Grail. 1842.

#### A FAREWELL

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,  
Thy tribute wave deliver;  
No more by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
A rivulet, then a river;  
Nowhere by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder-tree,  
And here thine aspen shiver;  
And here by thee will hum the bee,  
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver;  
But not by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever. 1842

#### THE VISION OF SIN

##### I

I HAD a vision when the night was late;  
A youth came riding toward a palace-  
gate.

He rode a horse with wings, that would  
have flown,

But that his heavy rider kept him down.  
And from the palace came a child of sin,  
And took him by the curls, and led him  
in,

Where sat a company with heated eyes,  
Expecting when a fountain should arise.  
A sleepy light upon their brows and  
lips—

As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles  
and capes—

Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid  
shapes,  
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,  
and piles of grapes.

##### II

Then methought I heard a mellow  
sound,

Gathering up from all the lower ground;  
Narrowing in to where they sat assem-  
bled,

Low voluptuous music winding trem-  
bled,

Woven in circles. They that heard it  
sigh'd,

Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,  
Swung themselves, and in low tones re-  
plied;

Till the fountain spouted, showering  
wide

Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail.  
Then the music touch'd the gates and  
died,

Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,  
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale:  
Till thronging in and in, to where they  
waited,

As 't were a hundred-throated nightin-  
gale,

The strong tempestuous treble throb'd  
 and palpitated ;  
 Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,  
 Caught the sparkles, and in circles,  
 Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid  
 mazes,  
 Flung the torrent rainbow round.  
 Then they started from their places,  
 Moved with violence, changed in hue,  
 Caught each other with wild grimaces,  
 Half-invisible to the view,  
 Wheeling with precipitate paces  
 To the melody, till they flew,  
 Hair and eyes and limbs and faces,  
 Twisted hard in fierce embraces,  
 Like to Furies, like to Graces,  
 Dash'd together in blinding dew ;  
 Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,  
 The nerve-dissolving melody  
 Fluttered headlong from the sky.

## III

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-  
 tract,  
 That girt the region with high cliff and  
 lawn.  
 I saw that every morning, far with-  
 drawn  
 Beyond the darkness and the cataract,  
 God made Himself an awful rose of  
 dawn,  
 Unheeded ; and detaching, fold by fold,  
 From those still heights, and, slowly  
 drawing near,  
 A vapor heavy, hueless, formless, cold,  
 Came floating on for many a month and  
 year,  
 Unheeded ; and I thought I would have  
 spoken,  
 And warn'd that madman ere it grew  
 too late,  
 But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine  
 was broken,  
 When that cold vapor touch'd the palace-  
 gate,  
 And link'd again. I saw within my  
 head  
 A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as  
 death,  
 Who slowly rode across a wither'd  
 heath,  
 And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

## IV

" Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !  
 Here is custom come your way ;  
 Take my brute, and lead him in.  
 Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

" Bitter barmaid, waning fast !  
 See that sheets are on my bed.  
 What ! the flower of life is past ;  
 It is long before you wed.

" Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,  
 At the Dragon on the heath !  
 Let us have a quiet hour,  
 Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

" I am old, but let me drink ;  
 Bring me spices, bring me wine ;  
 I remember, when I think,  
 That my youth was half divine.

" Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,  
 When a blanket wraps the day.  
 When the rotten woodland drips,  
 And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

" Sit thee down, and have no shame.  
 Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee ;  
 What care I for any name ?  
 What for order or degree ?

" Let me screw thee up a peg ;  
 Let me loose thy tongue with wine ;  
 Callest thou that thing a leg ?  
 Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

" Thou shalt not be saved by works,  
 Thou hast been a sinner too ;  
 Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,  
 Empty scarecrows, I and you !

" Fill the cup and fill the can,  
 Have a rouse before the morn ;  
 Every moment dies a man,  
 Every moment one is born.

" We are men of ruin'd blood ;  
 Therefore comes it we are wise.  
 Fish are we that love the mud,  
 Rising to no fancy-flies.

" Name and fame ! to fly sublime  
 Thro' the courts, the camps, the  
 schools,  
 Is to be the ball of Time,  
 Bandied by the hands of fools.

" Friendship !—to be two in one—  
 Let the canting liar pack !  
 Well I know, when I am gone,  
 How she mouths behind my back.

" Virtue !—to be good and just—  
 Every heart, when sifted well,  
 Is a clot of warmer dust,  
 Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

"O, we two as well can look  
Whited thought and cleanly life  
As the priest, above his book  
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

"Fill the cup and fill the can,  
Have a rouse before the morn :  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

"Drink, and let the parties rave ;  
They are fill'd with idle spleen,  
Rising, falling, like a wave,  
For they know not what they mean.

"He that roars for liberty  
Faster binds a tyrant's power,  
And the tyrant's cruel glee  
Forces on the freer hour.

"Fill the can and fill the cup ;  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

"Greet her with applause breath,  
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;  
In her right a civic wreath,  
In her left a human head.

"No, I love not what is new ;  
She is of an ancient house,  
And I think we know the hue  
Of that cap upon her brows.

"Let her go ! her thirst she slakes  
Where the bloody conduit runs,  
Then her sweetest meal she makes  
On the first-born of her sons.

"Drink to lofty hopes that cool,—  
Visions of a perfect State ;  
Drink we, last, the public fool,  
Frantic love and frantic hate.

"Chant me now some wicked stave,  
Till thy drooping courage rise,  
And the glow-worm of the grave  
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue,  
Set thy hoary fancies free ;  
What is loathsome to the young  
Savors well to thee and me.

"Change, reverting to the years,  
When thy nerves could understand  
What there is in loving tears,  
And the warmth of hand in hand.

"Tell me tales of thy first love—  
April hopes, the fools of chance—  
Till the graves begin to move,  
And the dead begin to dance.

"Fill the can and fill the cup ;  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

"Trooping from their mouldy dens  
The chap-fallen circle spreads—  
Welcome, fellow-citizens,  
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

"You are bones, and what of that ?  
Every face, however full,  
Padded round with flesh and fat,  
Is but modell'd on a skull.

"Death is king, and Vivat Rex !  
Tread a measure on the stones,  
Madam—if I know your sex  
From the fashion of your bones.

"No, I cannot praise the fire  
In your eye—nor yet your lip ;  
All the more do I admire  
Joints of cunning workmanship.

"Lo ! God's likeness—the ground  
plan—  
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor frame  
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,  
Far too naked to be shamed !

"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance  
While we keep a little breath !  
Drink to heavy Ignorance !  
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

"Thou art mazed, the night is long,  
And the longer night is near—  
What ! I am not all as wrong  
As a bitter jest is dear.

"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,  
When the locks are crisp and curl'  
Unto me my maudlin gall  
And my mockeries of the world.

"Fill the cup and fill the can ;  
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !  
Dregs of life, and lees of man ;  
Yet we will not die forlorn."

v

The voice grew faint ; there came  
further change ;

Once more uprose the mystic mountain range.  
 Below were men and horses pierced  
 with worms,  
 and slowly quickening into lower forms ;  
 shards and scurf of salt, and scum of  
 dross,  
 a splash of rains, and refuse patch'd  
 with moss.  
 on some onespake : " Behold ! it was  
 a crime  
 sense avenged by sense that wore  
 with time."  
 other said : " The crime of sense be-  
 came  
 a crime of malice, and is equal blame."  
 and one : " He had not wholly quench'd  
 his power ;  
 little grain of conscience made him  
 sour."  
 last I heard a voice upon the slope  
 to the summit, " Is there any hope ?"  
 which an answer peal'd from that  
 high land,  
 in a tongue no man could under-  
 stand ;  
 and on the glimmering limit far with-  
 drawn  
 I made Himself an awful rose of  
 dawn. 1842.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

BREAK, break, break,  
 On thy cold gray stones. O Sea !  
 And I would that my tongue could utter  
 The thoughts that arise in me.

Well for the fisherman's boy,  
 That he shouts with his sister at play !  
 Well for the sailor lad,  
 That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on  
 To their haven under the hill ;  
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
 And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,  
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
 And the tender grace of a day that is  
 dead  
 Will never come back to me. 1842.

THE POET'S SONG

When rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
 He pass'd by the town and out of the  
 street ;

A light wind blew from the gates of  
 the sun,  
 And waves of shadow went over the  
 wheat ;  
 And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
 And chanted a melody loud and sweet,  
 That made the wild-swan pause in her  
 cloud,  
 And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopped as he hunted the fly,  
 The snake slipped under a spray,  
 The wild hawk stood with the down on  
 his beak,  
 And stared, with his foot on the prey ;  
 And the nightingale thought, " I have  
 sung many songs,  
 But never a one so gay,  
 For he sings of what the world will be  
 When the years have died away." 1842.

LYRICS FROM THE PRINCESS

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what  
 they mean,  
 Tears from the depth of some divine de-  
 spair  
 Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
 In looking on the happy autumn-fields,  
 And thinking of the days that are no  
 more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on  
 a sail,  
 That brings our friends up from the  
 underworld,  
 Sad as the last which reddens over one  
 That sinks with all we love below the  
 verge ;  
 So sad, so fresh, the days that are no  
 more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark sum-  
 mer dawns  
 The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
 To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
 The casement slowly grows a glimmer-  
 ing square ;  
 So sad, so strange, the days that are no  
 more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
 And sweet as those by hopeless fancy  
 feign'd  
 On lips that are for others ; deep as love,  
 Deep as first love, and wild with all re-  
 gret ;  
 O Death in Life, the days that are no  
 more !

O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying  
south,  
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O, tell her, Swallow, thou that know-  
est each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the  
South,  
And dark and true and tender is the  
North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could fol-  
low, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million  
loves.

O, were I thou that she might take  
me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died!

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart  
with love,  
Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods are  
green?

O, tell her, Swallow, that thy brood  
is flown;  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is  
made.

O, tell her, brief is life but love is long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the  
North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the  
South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden  
woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and  
make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O, we fell out, I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears.  
And blessings on the falling out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love  
And kiss again with tears!  
For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,

There above the little grave,  
O, there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me:  
While my little one, while my pretty one,  
sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon;  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty  
one, sleep.

The splendor falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story;  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens reply-  
ing,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river;  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dy-  
ing, dying.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums  
That beat to battle where he stands;  
Thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands.

A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
He sees his brood about thy knee;  
The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

Home they brought her warrior dead;  
She nor swoon'd nor utter'd cry.  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stepped,  
Took the face-cloth from the face;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears—  
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

Ask me no more: the moon may draw  
the sea;

The cloud may stoop from heaven and  
take the shape,  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of  
cape;  
But O too fond, when have I answer'd  
thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I  
give?  
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee  
die!  
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee  
live;

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are  
seal'd;  
I strove against the stream and all in  
vain;  
Let the great river take me to the  
main.  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.  
1847-1850.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first two of these lyrics, included in the body of the work, were published in the original edition, 1847; the others, inserted between the sections of the poem, were first given in the edition of 1850.

## IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBIIT MDCCCXXXIII<sup>1</sup>

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;  
Thou madest Life in man and brute;  
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot  
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;  
Thou madest man, he knows not why,  
He thinks he was not made to die;  
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,  
The highest, holiest manhood, thou.  
Our wills are ours, we know not how;  
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,  
For knowledge is of things we see;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;  
We mock thee when we do not fear:  
But help thy foolish ones to bear;  
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me,  
What seem'd my worth since I began;  
For merit lives from man to man,  
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Henry Hallam, Tennyson's closest friend, and betrothed to Tennyson's sister Emily, died at Vienna, September 15, 1833. See the *Life of Tennyson*, I., 49-55, 75-83, 104-106; and 295-327.



Forgive my grief for one removed,  
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.  
I trust he lives in thee, and there  
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering ories,  
Confusions of a wasted youth;  
Forgive them where they fail in truth,  
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.<sup>1</sup>

## III

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,  
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;  
A web is woven across the sky;  
From out waste places comes a cry,  
And murmurs from the dying sun;

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands—  
With all the music in her tone,  
A hollow echo of my own,—  
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
Embrace her as my natural good;  
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
Upon the threshold of the mind?

## V

I sometimes hold it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel;  
For words, like Nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
A use in measured language lies;  
The sad mechanic exercise,  
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er  
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;  
But that large grief which these en-  
fold

Is given in outline and no more.

<sup>1</sup>It must be particularly noticed that this introductory poem was among the *last written* of those which make up *In Memoriam*. The early parts begin with No. II. or No. III.

On the development of thought and feeling in the poem as a whole, which is fully shown in the parts here given, see Thomas Davidson's *Prolegomena to In Memoriam*. Alfred Gatty's *Key to In Memoriam*, and J. F. Genung's *In Memoriam*. See also the special Bibliography, p. 460.

## VI

One writes, that "other friends remain,"  
That "loss is common to the race"—  
And common is the commonplace,  
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make  
My own less bitter, rather more.  
Too common! Never morning wore  
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
Who pledgedst now thy gallant son,  
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,  
Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save  
Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd,  
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud  
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
At that last hour to please him well;  
Who mused on all I had to tell,  
And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home;  
And ever met him on his way  
With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"  
Or "here to-morrow will he come."

O, somewhere, meek, unconscious dove,  
That sittest ranging golden hair;  
And glad to find thyself so fair,  
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows  
In expectation of a guest;  
And thinking "this will please him  
best,"  
She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night;  
And with the thought her color burns;  
And, having left the glass, she turns  
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse  
Had fallen, and her future lord  
Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,  
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O, what to her shall be the end?  
And what to me remains of good?  
To her perpetual maidenhood,  
And unto me no second friend.

## VII

house, by which once more I stand  
e in the long unlovely street,  
rs, where my heart was used to  
beat  
ickly, waiting for a hand,

nd that can be clasp'd no more—  
old me, for I cannot sleep,  
i like a guilty thing I creep  
rliest morning to the door.

not here : but far away  
noise of life begins again,  
ghastly thro' the drizzling rain  
e bald street breaks the blank day.

## IX

hip, that from the Italian shore  
est the placid ocean-plains  
h my lost Arthur's loved remains,  
d thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

aw him home to those that mourn  
ain ; a favorable speed  
fle thy mirror'd mast, and lead  
prosperous floods his holy urn.

ght no ruder air perplex  
sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright  
our pure love, thro' early light  
glimmer on the dewy decks.

e all your lights around, above ;  
p, gentle heavens, before the  
prow ;  
p, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,  
riend, the brother of my love ;

rthur, whom I shall not see  
all my widow'd race be run ;  
r as the mother to the son,  
than my brothers are to me.

## X

r the noise about thy keel ;  
ear the bell struck in the night ;  
e the cabin-window bright ;  
the sailor at the wheel.

bring'st the sailor to his wife,  
d travell'd men from foreign lands ;  
d letters unto trembling hands ;  
thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

ing him : we have idle dreams ;  
s look of quiet flatters thus  
home-bred fancies. O, to us,  
ools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,  
That takes the sunshine and the rains,  
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains  
The chalice of the grapes of God ;

Than if with thee the roaring wells  
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine,  
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,  
Should toss with tangle and with shells.

## XI

Calm is the morn without a sound,  
Calm as to suit a calmer grief.  
And only thro' the faded leaf  
The chestnut pattering to the ground ;

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,  
And on these dews that drench the  
furze,  
And all the silvery gossamers  
That twinkle into green and gold ;

Calm and still light on yon great plain  
That sweeps with all its autumn  
bowers,  
And crowded farms and lessening  
towers,  
To mingle with the bounding main ;

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,  
These leaves that redden to the fall,  
And in my heart, if calm at all,  
If any calm, a calm despair ;

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
And waves that sway themselves in  
rest,  
And dead calm in that noble breast  
Which heaves but with the heaving  
deep.

## XIII

Tears of the widower, when he sees  
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,  
And moves his doubtful arms, and  
feels  
Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,  
A void where heart on heart reposed :  
And, where warm hands have prest  
and closed,  
Silence, till I be silent too ;

Which weep the comrade of my choice,  
An awful thought, a life removed,  
The human-hearted man I loved,  
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come, Time, and teach me, many years,  
 I do not suffer in a dream ;  
 For now so strange do these things  
 seem,  
 Mine eyes have leisure for their tears,  
 My fancies time to rise on wing.  
 And glance about the approaching  
 sails,  
 As tho' they brought but merchants'  
 bales,  
 And not the burthen that they bring.

## XIV

If one should bring me this report,  
 That thou hadst touch'd the land to-  
 day,  
 And I went down unto the quay,  
 And found thee lying in the port ;

And standing, muffled round with woe,  
 Should see thy passengers in rank  
 Come stepping lightly down the  
 plank,  
 And beckoning unto those they know ;

And if along with these should come  
 The man I held as half-divine,  
 Should strike a sudden hand in mine,  
 And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,  
 And how my life had droop'd of late,  
 And he should sorrow o'er my state  
 And marvel what possess'd my brain ;

And I perceived no touch of change,  
 No hint of death in all his frame,  
 But found him all in all the same,  
 I should not feel it to be strange.

## XVIII

'T is well ; 't is something : we may  
 stand  
 Where he in English earth is laid,  
 And from his ashes may be made  
 The violet of his native land.

'T is little ; but it looks in truth  
 As if the quiet bones were blest  
 Among familiar names to rest  
 And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the  
 head  
 That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,  
 And come, whatever loves to weep,  
 And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, even yet, if this might be,  
 I, falling on his faithful heart,  
 Would breathing thro' his lips impart  
 The life that almost dies in me ;

That dies not, but endures with pain,  
 And slowly forms the firmer mind,  
 Treasuring the look it cannot find,  
 The words that are not heard again.

## XIX

The Danube to the Severn gave  
 The darken'd heart that beat no more ;  
 They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
 And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills ;  
 The salt sea-water passes by,  
 And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
 And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,  
 And hush'd my deepest grief of all.  
 When fill'd with tears that cannot  
 fall,

I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again  
 Is vocal in its wooded walls ;  
 My deeper anguish also falls,  
 And I can speak a little then.

## XXI

I sing to him that rests below,  
 And, since the grasses round me wave,  
 I take the grasses of the grave,  
 And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,  
 And sometimes harshly will he speak :  
 " This fellow would make weakness  
 weak,  
 And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers : " Let him be,  
 He loves to make parade of pain,  
 That with his piping he may gain  
 The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth : " Is this an hour  
 For private sorrow's barren song,  
 When more and more the people throng  
 The chairs and thrones of civil power ?

" A time to sicken and to swoon,  
 When Science reaches forth her arms  
 To lead from world to world, and  
 as  
 " om the latest moon ? "

Behold, ye speak an idle thing ;  
 Ye never knew the sacred dust.  
 I do but sing because I must,  
 And pipe but as the linnets sing ;

And one is glad ; her note is gay,  
 For now her little ones have ranged ;  
 And one is sad ; her note is changed,  
 Because her brood is stolen away.

## XXIII

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
 Or breaking into song by fits,  
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
 The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,  
 I wander, often falling lame,  
 And looking back to whence I came,  
 Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, How changed from where  
 it ran  
 Thro' lands where not a leaf was  
 dumb,  
 But all the lavish hills would hum  
 The murmur of a happy Pan ;

When each by turns was guide to each,  
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,  
 And Thought leaped out to wed with  
 Thought  
 Ere Thought could wed itself with  
 Speech ;

And all we met was fair and good,  
 And all was good that Time could  
 bring.

And all the secret of the Spring  
 Moved in the chambers of the blood ;

And many an old philosophy  
 On Argive heights divinely sang,  
 And round us all the thicket rang  
 To many a flute of Arcady.

## XXVII

I envy not in any moods  
 The captive void of noble rage,  
 The linnets born within the cage,  
 That never knew the summer woods ;

I envy not the beast that takes  
 His license in the field of time,  
 Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,  
 To whom a conscience never wakes ;

But that may count itself as blest,  
 Heart that never plighted troth

But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;  
 Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;  
 I feel it, when I sorrow most ;  
 'T is better to have loved and lost  
 Than never to have loved at all.

## XXVIII

The time draws near the birth of Christ.  
 The moon is hid, the night is still ;  
 The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
 Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
 From far and near, on mead and moor,  
 Swell out and fail, as if a door  
 Were shut between me and the sound ;

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
 That now dilate, and now decrease,  
 Peace and goodwill, goodwill and  
 peace,  
 Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept, and woke with pain,  
 I almost wish'd no more to wake,  
 And that my hold on life would break  
 Before I heard those bells again ;

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
 For they controll'd me when a boy ;  
 They bring me sorrow touch'd with  
 joy,  
 The merry, merry bells of Yule.

## XXX

With trembling fingers did we weave  
 The holly round the Christmas hearth ;  
 A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,  
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
 We gamboll'd, making vain pretence  
 Of gladness, with an awful sense  
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused : the winds were in the  
 beech ;  
 We heard them sweep the winter  
 land ;  
 And in a circle hand-in-hand  
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;  
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,  
 A merry song we sang with him  
 Last year ; impetuously we sang.

We ceased ; a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us : surely rest is meet.  
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is  
sweet,"  
And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;  
Once more we sang : "They do not die  
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, although they change ;

"Rapt from the flocke and the frail  
With gather'd power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,  
Draw forth the cheerful day from  
night :

O Father, touch the east, and light  
The light that shone when Hope was  
born.

## XXXI

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,  
And home to Mary's house return'd,  
Was this demanded—if he yearn'd  
To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those four  
days?"

There lives no record of reply,  
Which telling what it is to die  
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,  
The streets were fill'd with joyful  
sound,

A solemn gladness even crown'd  
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ !  
The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;  
He told it not, or something seal'd  
The lips of that Evangelist.

## XXXII

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
Nor other thought her mind admits  
But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede  
All other, when her ardent gaze  
Roves from the living brother's face,  
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
Borne down by gladness so complete,  
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet  
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful  
prayers,  
Whose loves in higher love endure ;  
What souls possess themselves so pure,  
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

## XXXIII

O thou that after toil and storm  
Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer  
air,

Whose faith has centre everywhere,  
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,  
Her early heaven, her happy views ;  
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse  
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,  
Her hands are quicker unto good.  
O, sacred be the flesh and blood  
To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe  
In holding by the law within,  
Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
And even for want of such a type.

## XL

Could we forget the widow'd hour  
And look on Spirits breathed away,  
As on a maiden in the day  
When first she wears her orange-flower !

When crown'd with blessing she doth  
rise

To take her latest leave of home,  
And hopes and light regrets that come  
Make April of her tender eyes ;

And doubtful joys the father move,  
And tears are on the mother's face,  
As parting with a long embrace  
She enters other realms of love :

Her office there to rear, to teach,  
Becoming as is meet and fit  
A link among the days, to knit  
The generations each with each ;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given  
A life that bears immortal fruit  
In those great offices that suit  
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern !  
How often shall her old fireside  
Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,  
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,  
And bring her babe, and make her  
boast,  
Till even those that miss'd her most  
Shall count new things as dear as old ;

But thou and I have shaken hands,  
Till growing winters lay me low ;  
My paths are in the fields I know,  
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XLVIII

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,  
Were taken to be such as closed  
Grave doubts and answers here pro-  
posed,  
Then these were such as men might  
scorn.

Her care is not to part and prove ;  
She takes, when harsher moods re-  
mit,  
What slender shade of doubt may flit,  
And makes it vassal unto love ;

And hence, indeed, she sports with words.  
But better serves a wholesome law,  
And holds it sin and shame to draw  
The deepest measure from the chords ;

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,  
But rather loosens from the lip  
Short swallow-flights of song, that dip  
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

LIV

O, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;  
That not one life shall be destroy'd,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void.  
When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything ;  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream ; but what am I ?  
An infant crying in the night ;  
An infant crying for the light,  
And with no language but a cry.

LV

The wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fail beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likeliest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
That Nature lends such evil dreams ?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere  
Her secret meaning in her deeds,  
And finding that of fifty seeds  
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of cares  
Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI

"So careful of the type?" but no.  
From scarped cliff and quarried stone  
She cries, "A thousand types are gone ;  
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :  
I bring to life, I bring to death ;  
The spirit does but mean the breath :  
I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,  
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,  
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed  
And love Creation's final law—  
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shriek'd against his creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,  
Who battled for the True, the Just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
That tare each other in their slime,  
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !  
O for thy voice to soothe and bless !  
What hope of answer, or redress ?  
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

## LVII

Peace; come away : the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song.  
Peace; come away : we do him wrong  
To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come; let us go : your cheeks are pale;  
But half my life I leave behind.  
Methinks my friend is richly shrined;  
But I shall pass, my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,  
One set slow bell will seem to toll  
The passing of the sweetest soul  
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,  
Eternal greetings to the dead;  
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,  
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

## LVIII

In those sad words I took farewell.  
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,  
As drop by drop the water falls  
In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace  
Of hearts that beat from day to day,  
Half-conscious of their dying clay,  
And those cold crypts where they shall  
cease.

The high Muse answer'd : "Wherefore  
grieve  
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?  
Abide a little longer here,  
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

## LXIV

Dost thou look back on what hath been,  
As some divinely gifted man,  
Whose life in low estate began  
And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,  
And breasts the blows of circumstance,  
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known  
And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
To mould a mighty state's decrees,  
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,  
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope  
The pillar of a people's hope,  
The center of a world's desire;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,  
When all his active powers are still,  
A distant dearness in the hill,  
A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,  
While yet beside its vocal springs  
He play'd at counsellors and kings  
With one that was his earliest mate;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea  
And reaps the labor of his hands,  
Or in the furrow musing stands:  
"Does my old friend remember me?"

## LXVII

When on my bed the moonlight falls,  
I know that in thy place of rest  
By that broad water of the west  
There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,  
As slowly steals a silver flame  
Along the letters of thy name,  
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away,  
From off my bed the moonlight dies;  
And closing eaves of wearied eyes  
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray;

And then I know the mist is drawn  
A lucid veil from coast to coast,  
And in the dark church like a ghost  
Thy tablet glimmers in the dawn.

## LXXIV

As sometimes in a dead man's face,  
To those that watch it more and more,  
A likeness, hardly seen before,  
Comes out—to some one of his race;

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,  
I see thee what thou art, and know  
Thy likeness to the wise below,  
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,  
And what I see I leave unsaid,  
Nor speak it, knowing Death has made  
His darkness beautiful with thee.

## LXXVIII

Again at Christmas did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas hearth;  
The silent snow possess'd the earth,  
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve.

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,  
No wing of wind the region swept,  
But over all things brooding slept  
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,  
Again our ancient games had place,  
The mimic picture's breathing grace,  
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?  
No single tear, no mark of pain—  
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?  
O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!  
No—mixed with all this mystic frame,  
Her deep relations are the same,  
But with long use her tears are dry.

## LXXXIII

Dip down upon the northern shore,  
O sweet new-year delaying long;  
Thou doest expectant Nature wrong;  
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,  
Thy sweetness from its proper place;  
Can trouble live with April days,  
Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,  
The little speedwell's darling blue,  
Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,  
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,  
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,  
That longs to burst a frozen bud  
And flood a fresher throat with song.

## LXXXV

This truth came borne with bier and pall,  
I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,  
'T is better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,  
Demanding, so to bring relief  
To this which is our common grief,  
What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above  
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;  
And whether love for him have drain'd  
My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws  
A faithful answer from the breast,

Thro' light reproaches, half expressed,  
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,  
Till on mine ear this message falls,  
That in Vienna's fatal walls  
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair  
That range above our mortal state,  
In circle round the blessed gate,  
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,  
And show'd him in the fountain fresh  
All knowledge that the sons of flesh  
Shall gather in the cycléd times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,  
Whose life, whose thoughts were little  
worth,  
To wander on a darken'd earth,  
Where all things round me breathed of  
him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,  
O heart, with kindest motion warm,  
O sacred essence, other form,  
O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,  
How much of act at human hands  
The sense of human will demands  
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,  
I felt and feel, tho' left alone,  
His being working in mine own,  
The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd  
With gifts of grace, that might express  
All-comprehensive tenderness,  
All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved  
To works of weakness, but I find  
An image comforting the mind,  
And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,  
That loved to handle spiritual strife,  
Diffused the shock thro' all my life,  
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again  
For other friends that once I met;  
Nor can it suit me to forget  
The mighty hopes that make us men.



I woo your love : I count it crime  
To mourn for any overmuch ;  
I, the divided half of such  
A friendship as had master'd Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is  
Eternal, separate from fears.  
The all-assuming months and years  
Can take no part away from this ;

But Summer on the steaming floods,  
And Spring that swells the narrow  
brooks,  
And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,  
That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave  
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,  
My old affection of the tomb,  
And my prime passion in the grave.

My old affection of the tomb,  
A part of stillness, yearns to speak :  
" Arise, and get thee forth and seek  
A friendship for the years to come.

" I watch thee from the quiet shore ;  
Thy spirit up to mine can reach ;  
But in dear words of human speech  
We two communicate no more."

And I, " Can clouds of nature stain  
The starry clearness of the free ?  
How is it ? Canst thou feel for me  
Some painless sympathy with pain ?"

And lightly does the whisper fall :  
" 'T is hard for thee to fathom this ;  
I triumph in conclusive bliss,  
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead ;  
Or so methinks the dead would say ;  
Or so shall grief with symbols play  
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,  
That those things pass, and I shall prove  
A meeting somewhere, love with love,  
I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,  
I, clasping brother-hands, aver  
I could not, if I would, transfer  
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart  
The promise of the golden hours ?  
First love, first friendship, equal  
powers,  
That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,  
That beats within a lonely place,  
That yet remembers his embrace,  
But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest  
Quite in the love of what is gone,  
But seeks to beat in time with one  
That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,  
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,  
The primrose of the later year,  
As not unlike to that of Spring.

## LXXXVI

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,  
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom  
Of evening over brake and bloom  
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below  
Thro' all the dewy tassell'd wood,  
And shadowing down the horned flood  
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
The full new life that feeds thy breath  
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and  
Death,  
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas  
On leagues of odor streaming far,  
To where in yonder orient star  
A hundred spirits whisper " Peace."

## LXXXVII

I past beside the reverend walls  
In which of old I wore the gown ;  
I roved at random thro' the town,  
And saw the tumult of the halls ;

And heard once more in college fanes  
The storm their high-built organs  
make,  
And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
The prophet blazon'd on the panes ;

And caught once more the distant shout,  
The measured pulse of racing oars  
Among the willows : paced the shores  
And many a bridge, and all about.

The same gray flats again, and felt  
The same, but not the same : and last  
Up that long walk of limes I past  
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door.  
 I linger'd ; all within was noise  
 Of songs, and clapping hands, and  
 boys  
 That crash'd the glass and beat the floor ;

Where once we held debate, a band  
 Of youthful friends, on mind and art,  
 And labor, and the changing mart,  
 And all the framework of the land ;

When one would aim an arrow fair,  
 But send it slackly from the string ;  
 And one would pierce an outer ring,  
 And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
 Would cleave the mark. A willing  
 ear

We lent him. Who but hung to hear  
 The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and  
 grace  
 And music in the bounds of law,  
 To those conclusions when we saw  
 The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow  
 In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;  
 And over those ethereal eyes  
 The bar of Michael Angelo ?

## LXXXVIII

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,  
 Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,  
 O, tell me where the senses mix,  
 O, tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes em-  
 ploy  
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,  
 And in the midmost heart of grief  
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy ;

And I—my harp would prelude woe—  
 I cannot all command the strings ;  
 The glory of the sum of things  
 Will flash along the chords and go.

## XCVI

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue  
 eyes  
 Are tender over drowning flies,  
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew  
 In many a subtle question versed,

Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,  
 But ever strove to make it true ;

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,  
 At last he beat his music out.  
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd  
 strength,

He would not make his judgment  
 blind,

He faced the spectres of the mind  
 And laid them ; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own.  
 And Power was with him in the night.  
 Which makes the darkness and the  
 light,

And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
 While Israel made their gods of gold,  
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

## XCVII

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees ;  
 He finds on misty mountain-ground  
 His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;  
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life—  
 I look'd on these and thought of thee  
 In vastness and in mystery,  
 And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on eye,  
 Their hearts of old have beat in tune,  
 Their meetings made December June,  
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away :  
 The days she never can forget  
 Are earnest that he loves her yet,  
 Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart ;  
 He loves her yet, she will not weep,  
 Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep  
 He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,  
 He reads the secret of the star,  
 He seems so near and yet so far,  
 He looks so cold : she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,  
 A wither'd violet is her bliss ;  
 She knows not what his greatness is,  
 For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings  
Of early faith and plighted vows ;  
She knows but matters of the house,  
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move,  
She darkly feels him great and wise.  
She dwells on him with faithful eyes,  
"I cannot understand ; I love."

## CII

We leave the well-beloved place  
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;  
The roofs that heard our earliest cry  
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,  
As down the garden-walks I move,  
Two spirits of a diverse love  
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, "Here thy boyhood sung  
Long since its matin song, and heard  
The low love-language of the bird  
In native hazels tassel-hung."

The other answers, "Yea, but here  
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours  
With thy lost friend among the  
bowers,  
And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,  
And each prefers his separate claim,  
Poor rivals in a losing game,  
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go ; my feet are set  
To leave the pleasant fields and  
farms ;  
They mix in one another's arms  
To one pure image of regret.

## CIV

The time draws near the birth of Christ ;  
The moon is hid, the night is still ;  
A single church below the hill  
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,  
That wakens at this hour of rest  
A single murmur in the breast,  
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,  
In lands where not a memory strays,  
Nor landmark breathes of other days,  
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

## CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light :  
The year is dying in the night ;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :  
The year is going, let him go ;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more ;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor ;  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife ;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times ;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful  
rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite ;  
Ring in the love of truth and right.  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

## CVIII

I will not shut me from my kind,  
And, lest I stiffen into stone,  
I will not eat my heart alone,  
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind :

What profit lies in barren faith,  
And vacant yearning, tho' with might  
To scale the heaven's highest height.  
Or dive below the wells of death ?

What find I in the highest place,  
But mine own phantom chanting  
hymns ?  
And on the depths of death there  
swims  
The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be  
Of sorrow under human skies :  
'T is held that sorrow makes us wise,  
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

## CXI

The churl in spirit, up or down  
Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,  
To him who grasps a golden ball,  
By blood a king, at heart a clown,—

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil  
His want in forms for fashion's sake,  
Will let his coltish nature break  
At seasons thro' the gilded pale ;

For who can always act? but he,  
To whom a thousand memories call,  
Not being less but more than all  
The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd  
Each office of the social hour  
To noble manners, as the flower  
And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
Drew in the expression of an eye  
Where God and Nature met in light ;

And thus he bore without abuse  
The grand old name of gentleman,  
Defamed by every charlatan,  
And soil'd with all ignoble use.

## CXIII

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise ;  
Yet how much wisdom sleeps with  
thee  
Which not alone had guided me,  
But served the seasons that may rise ;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen  
In intellect, with force and skill  
To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—  
I doubt not what thou wouldst have  
been :

A life in civic action warm,  
A soul on highest mission sent,  
A potent voice of Parliament,  
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,  
Becoming, when the time has birth,  
A lever to uplift the earth  
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and  
go,  
With agonies, with energies,  
With overthrowings, and with cries,  
And undulations to and fro.

## CXIV

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall  
rail  
Against her beauty? May she mix  
With men and prosper! Who shall  
fix  
Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire ;  
She sets her forward countenance  
And leaps into the future chance,  
Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—  
She cannot fight the fear of death.  
What is she, cut from love and faith,  
But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of demons? fiery-hot to burst  
All barriers in her onward race  
For power. Let her know her place ;  
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,  
If all be not in vain, and guide  
Her footsteps, moving side by side  
With Wisdom, like the younger child ;

For she is earthly of the mind,  
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.  
O friend, who earnest to thy goal  
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,  
Who grewest not alone in power  
And knowledge, but by year and hour  
In reverence and in charity.

## CXV

Now fades the last long streak of snow.  
Now burgeons every maze of quick  
About the flowering squares, and  
thick  
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long.  
The distance takes a lovelier hue,  
And drown'd in yonder living blue  
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,  
The flocks are whiter down the vale,  
And milkier every milky sail  
On winding stream or distant sea.

Where now the seaweed pipes, or dives  
 In yonder greening gleam, and fly  
 The happy birds, that change their  
     sky  
 To build and brood, that live their lives  
 From land to land; and in my breast  
 Spring wakens too, and my regret  
 Becomes an April violet,  
 And buds and blossoms like the rest.

## CXVIII

Contemplate all this work of Time,  
 The giant laboring in his youth;  
 Nor dream of human love and truth,  
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead  
 Are breathers of an ampler day  
 For ever nobler ends. They say,  
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
 And grew to seeming-random forms,  
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime to  
     clime,  
 The herald of a higher race,  
 And of himself in higher place,  
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;  
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe  
 Like glories, move his course, and  
     show  
 That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
 And heated hot with burning fears,  
 And dipped in baths of hissing tears,  
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly  
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;  
 Move upward, working out the beast,  
 And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXIX

There rolls the deep where grew the  
     tree.  
 O earth, what changes hast thou seen!  
 There where the long street roars hath  
     been

The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow  
 From form to form, and nothing  
     stands;

They melt like mist, the solid lands,  
 Like clouds they shape themselves and  
     go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,  
 And dream my dream, and hold it true;  
 For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,  
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

## CXXIV

That which we dare invoke to bless;  
 Our dearest faith; our ghastliest  
     doubt;  
 He, They, One, All; within, without;  
 The Power in darkness whom we guess,—

I found Him not in world or sun,  
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye,  
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
 The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,  
 I heard a voice, "believe no more,"  
 And heard an ever-breaking shore  
 That tumbled in the Godless deep,

A warmth within the breast would melt  
 The freezing reason's colder part,  
 And like a man in wrath the heart  
 Stood up and answer'd, "I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear:  
 But that blind clamor made me wise;  
 Then was I as a child that cries,  
 But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again  
 What is, and no man understands;  
 And out of darkness came the hands  
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

## CXXV

What ever I have said or sung,  
 Some bitter notes my harp would give,  
 Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live  
 A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet hope had never lost her youth,  
 She did but look through dimmer eyes;  
 Or Love but play'd with gracious lies,  
 Because he felt so fix'd in truth;

And if the song were full of care,  
 He breathed the spirit of the song;  
 And if the words were sweet and  
     strong  
 He set his royal signet there;

Abiding with me till I sail  
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,  
And this electric force, that keeps  
A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

## CXXVI

Love is and was my lord and king,  
And in his presence I attend  
To hear the tidings of my friend,  
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord,  
And will be, tho' as yet I keep  
Within the court on earth, and sleep  
Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel  
Who moves about from place to place,  
And whispers to the worlds of space,  
In the deep night, that all is well.

## CXXVII

And all is well, tho' faith and form  
Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;  
Well roars the storm to those that hear  
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,  
And justice, even tho' thrice again  
The red fool-fury of the Seine  
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,  
And him, the lazar, in his rags !  
They tremble, the sustaining crags ;  
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;  
The fortress crashes from on high,  
The brute earth lightens to the sky,  
And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of hell ;  
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,  
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,  
And smilest, knowing all is well.

## CXXIX

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,  
So far, so near in woe and weal,  
O loved the most, when most I feel  
There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown, human, divine ;  
Sweet human hand and lips and eye :  
Dear heavenly friend that canst not  
die,

Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;  
Loved deeper, darker understood ;  
Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
And mingle all the world with thee.

## CXXX

Thy voice is on the rolling air ;  
I hear thee where the waters run ;  
Thou standest in the rising sun,  
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;  
But tho' I seem in star and flower  
To feel thee some diffusive power,  
I do not therefore love thee less.

My love involves the love before ;  
My love is vaster passion now ;  
Tho' mix'd with God and Nature thou,  
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;  
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;  
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;  
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

## CXXXI

O living will that shalt endure  
When all that seems shall suffer shock,  
Rise in the spiritual rock,  
Flow thro' our deeds and make them  
pure,

That we may lift from out of dust  
A voice as unto him that hears,  
A cry above the conquer'd years  
To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,  
The truths that never can be proved  
Until we close with all we loved,  
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

1833-42. 1850.

TO THE QUEEN<sup>1</sup>

REVERED, beloved—O you that hold  
A nobler office upon earth  
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth  
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,—since your Royal grace  
To one of less desert allows  
This laurel greener from the brows  
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;

<sup>1</sup> Prefixed to the first edition of Tennyson's  
Poems published after he became Poet Laureate.

And should your greatness, and the care  
That yokes with empire, yield you time  
To make demand of modern rhyme  
If aught of ancient worth be there ;

Then—while a sweeter music wakes,  
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,  
Where all about your palace-walls  
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—

Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;  
For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
In vacant chambers, I could trust  
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood  
As noble till the latest day !  
May children of our children say,  
"She wrought her people lasting good ;

"Her court was pure ; her life serene ;  
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;  
A thousand claims to reverence closed  
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;

"And statesmen at her council met  
Who knew the seasons when to take  
Occasion by the hand, and make  
The bounds of freedom wider yet

"By shaping some august decree  
Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
Broad-based upon her people's will,  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea."  
1851.

#### THE EAGLE

##### FRAGMENT

He clasps the crag with crooked hands,  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.  
1851.

#### COME NOT WHEN I AM DEAD

COME not, when I am dead,  
To drop thy foolish tears upon my  
grave.  
To trample round my fallen head,  
And vex the unhappy dust thou  
wouldst not save.  
There let the wind sweep and the plover  
cry ;  
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime  
I care no longer, being all unblest ;  
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of  
time,  
And I desire to rest.  
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where  
I lie ;  
Go by, go by. 1851.

#### ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

##### I

BURY the Great Duke  
With an empire's lamentation ;  
Let us bury the Great Duke  
To the noise of the mourning of a  
mighty nation ;  
Mourning when their leaders fall,  
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

##### II

Where shall we lay the man whom we  
deplore ?  
Here, in streaming London's central  
roar.  
Let the sound of those he wrought for,  
And the feet of those he fought for,  
Echo round his bones for evermore.

##### III

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,  
As fits an universal woe,  
Let the long, long procession go,  
And let the sorrowing crowd about it  
grow,  
And let the mournful martial music  
blow ;  
The last great Englishman is low.

##### IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
Remembering all his greatness in the  
past.  
No more in soldier fashion will he greet  
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.  
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute !  
Mourn for the man of long-enduring  
blood,  
The statesman-warrior, moderate, reso-  
lute,  
Whole in himself, a common good.  
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,  
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,  
Our greatest yet with least pretence,  
Great in council and great in war.

Foremost captain of his time,  
 Rich in saving common-sense,  
 And, as the greatest only are,  
 In his simplicity sublime.  
 O good gray head which all men knew,  
 O voice from which their omens all men  
     drew,  
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
 O fallen at length that tower of strength  
 Which stood four-square to all the winds  
     that blew!  
 Such was he whom we deplore.  
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.  
 The great World-victor's victor will be  
     seen no more.

## V

All is over and done,  
 Render thanks to the Giver,  
 England, for thy son.  
 Let the bell be toll'd.  
 Render thanks to the Giver,  
 And render him to the mould.  
 Under the cross of gold  
 That shines over city and river,  
 There he shall rest for ever  
 Among the wise and the bold.  
 Let the bell be toll'd,  
 And a reverent people behold  
 The towering car, the sable steeds.  
 Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,  
 Dark in its funeral fold.  
 Let the bell be toll'd,  
 And a deeper knell in the heart be  
     knoll'd;  
 And the sound of the sorrowing anthem  
     roll'd  
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross;  
 And the volleying cannon thunder his  
     loss;  
 He knew their voices of old.  
 For many a time in many a clime  
 His captain's-ear has heard them boom  
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.  
 When he with those deep voices  
     wrought,  
 Guarding realms and kings from shame,  
 With those deep voices our dead cap-  
     tain taught  
 The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
 In that dread sound to the great name  
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,  
 In praise and in dispraise the same,  
 A man of well-temper'd frame.  
 O civic muse, to such a name,  
 To such a name for ages long,  
 To such a name,  
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
 And ever-echoing avenues of song!

## VI

"Who is he that cometh, like an hon-  
     or'd guest,  
 With banner and with music, with sol-  
     dier and with priest,  
 With a nation weeping, and breaking  
     on my rest?"—  
 Mighty Seaman, this is he  
 Was great by land as thou by sea.  
 Thine island loves thee well, thou  
     famous man,  
 The greatest sailor since our world be-  
     gan.  
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
 To thee the greatest soldier comes;  
 For this is he  
 Was great by land as thou by sea.  
 His foes were thine; he kept us free;  
 O, give him welcome, this is he  
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
 And worthy to be laid by thee;  
 For this is England's greatest son,  
 He that gain'd a hundred fights,  
 Nor ever lost an English gun;  
 This is he that far away  
 Against the myriads of Assaye  
 Clash'd with his fiery few and won;  
 And underneath another sun,  
 Warring on a later day,  
 Round affrighted Lisbon drew  
 The treble works, the vast designs  
 Of his labor'd rampart-lines,  
 Where he greatly stood at bay,  
 Whence he issued forth anew,  
 And ever great and greater grew,  
 Beating from the wasted vines  
 Back to France her banded swarms,  
 Back to France with countless blows,  
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew  
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,  
 Follow'd up in valley and glen  
 With blare of bugle, clamor of men,  
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,  
 And England pouring on her foes,  
 Such a war had such a close.  
 Again their ravening eagle rose  
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing  
     wings,  
 And barking for the thrones of kings;  
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron  
     crown  
 On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler  
     down;  
 A day of onsets of despair!  
 Dash'd on every rocky square.  
 Their surging charges foam'd them-  
     selves away;  
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;



Thro' the long-tormented air  
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,  
And down we swept and charged and  
overthrew.

So great a soldier taught us there  
What long-enduring hearts could do  
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!  
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,  
And pure as he from taint of craven  
guile,

O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
If aught of things that here befall  
Touch a spirit among things divine,  
If love of country move thee there at all.  
Be glad, because his bones are laid by  
thine!

And thro' the centuries let a people's  
voice

In full acclaim,

A people's voice,

The proof and echo of all human fame,

A people's voice, when they rejoice

At civic revel and pomp and game,

Attest their great commander's claim

With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,  
Eternal honor to his name.

## VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.  
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams  
forget,

Confused by brainless mobs and lawless  
Powers,

Thank Him who isled us here, and  
roughly set

His Briton in blown seas and storming  
showers,

We have a voice with which to pay the  
debt

Of boundless love and reverence and  
regret

To those great men who fought, and  
kept it ours.

And keep it ours, O God, from brute  
control!

O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,  
the soul

Of Europe, keep our noble England  
whole,

And save the one true seed of freedom  
sown

Betwixt a people and their ancient  
throne,

That sober freedom out of which there  
springs

Our loyal passion for our temperate  
kings! [kind

For, saving that, ye help to save man-

Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,  
And drill the raw world for the march  
of mind,

Till crowds at length be sane and crowns  
be just.

But wink no more in slothful overtrust.

Remember him who led your hosts;

He bade you guard the sacred coasts.

Your cannons moulder on the seaward  
wall;

His voice is silent in your council-hall

For ever; and whatever tempests lour

For ever silent; even if they broke

In thunder, silent; yet remember all

He spoke among you, and the Man who  
spoke;

Who never sold the truth to serve the  
hour,

Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;

Who let the turbid streams of rumor  
flow

Thro' either babbling world of high and  
low;

Whose life was work, whose language  
rife

With rugged maxims hewn from life;

Who never spoke against a foe;

Whose eighty winters freeze with one  
rebuke

All great self-seekers trampling on the  
right.

Truth-teller was our England's Alfred  
named;

Truth-lover was our English Duke!

Whatever record leap to light

He never shall be shamed.

## VIII

Lo! the leader in these glorious wars

Now to glorious burial slowly borne,

Follow'd by the brave of other lands,

He, on whom from both her open hands

Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,

And affluent Fortune emptied all her  
horn.

Yea, let all good things await

Him who cares not to be great

But as he saves or serves the state.

Not once or twice in our rough island-  
story

The path of duty was the way to glory.

He that walks it, only thirsting

For the right, and learns to deaden

Love of self, before his journey closes,

He shall find the stubborn thistle burst-  
ing

Into glossy purples, which out-redden

All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story

The path of duty was the way to glory.  
 He, that ever following her commands,  
 On with toil of heart and knees and  
 hands,  
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has  
 won  
 His path upward, and prevail'd,  
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty  
 scaled  
 Are close upon the shining table-lands  
 To which our God Himself is moon and  
 sun.  
 Such was he: his work is done.  
 But while the races of mankind endure  
 Let his great example stand  
 Colossal, seen of every land,  
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman  
 pure ;  
 Till in all lands and thro' all human story  
 The path of duty be the way to glory.  
 And let the land whose hearths he saved  
 from shame  
 For many and many an age proclaim  
 At civic revel and pomp and game,  
 And when the long-illumined cities  
 flame,  
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,  
 Eternal honor to his name.

## IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
 By some yet un moulded tongue  
 Far on in summers that we shall not see.  
 Peace, it is a day of pain  
 For one about whose patriarchal knee  
 Late the little children clung.  
 O peace, it is a day of pain  
 For one upon whose hand and heart and  
 brain  
 Once the weight and fate of Europe  
 hung.  
 Ours the pain, be his the gain !  
 More than is of man's degree  
 Must be with us, watching here  
 At this, our great solemnity.  
 Whom we see not we revere ;  
 We revere, and we refrain  
 From talk of battles loud and vain,  
 And brawling memories all too free  
 For such a wise humility  
 As befits a solemn fane :  
 We revere, and while we hear  
 The tides of Music's golden sea  
 Setting toward eternity,  
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,  
 Until we doubt not that for one so true  
 There must be other nobler work to do  
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,

And Victor he must ever be.  
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill  
 And break the shore, and evermore  
 Make and break, and work their will,  
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads  
 roll  
 Round us, each with different powers,  
 And other forms of life than ours,  
 What know we greater than the soul ?  
 On God and Godlike men we build our  
 trust.  
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the  
 people's ears ;  
 The dark crowd moves, and there are  
 sobs and tears ;  
 The black earth yawns ; the mortal dis-  
 appears ;  
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;  
 He is gone who seem'd so great.--  
 Gone, but nothing can bereave him  
 Of the force he made his own  
 Being here, and we believe him  
 Something far advanced in State,  
 And that he wears a truer crown  
 Than any wreath that man can weave  
 him.  
 Speak no more of his renown,  
 Lay your earthly fancies down,  
 And in the vast cathedral leave him,  
 God accept him, Christ receive him !  
 1852.

## HANDS ALL ROUND

FIRST pledge our Queen this solemn  
 night,  
 Then drink to England, every guest ;  
 That man's the best Cosmopolite  
 Who loves his native country best.  
 May freedom's oak for ever live  
 With stronger life from day to day ;  
 That man's the true Conservative  
 Who lops the moulder'd branch away.  
 Hands all round !  
 God the traitor's hope confound !  
 To this great cause of Freedom drink, my  
 friends,  
 And the great name of England, round  
 and round.  
 To all the loyal hearts who long  
 To keep our English Empire whole !  
 To all our noble sons, the strong  
 New England of the Southern Pole !  
 To England under Indian skies,  
 To those dark millions of her realm !  
 To Canada whom we love and prize,  
 Whatever statesman hold the helm.  
 Hands all round !

God the traitor's hope confound !  
 To this great name of England drink, my  
     friends,                      [round.  
 And all her glorious empire, round and

To all our statesmen so they be  
 True leaders of the land's desire !  
 To both our Houses, may they see  
 Beyond the borough and the shire !  
 We sail'd wherever ship could sail,  
 We founded many a mighty state ;  
 Pray God our greatness may not fail  
 Thro' craven fears of being great !  
     Hands all round !  
 God the traitor's hope confound !  
 To this great cause of Freedom drink, my  
     friends,  
 And the great name of England, round  
     and round.                      1852.

#### THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE<sup>1</sup>

HALF a league, half a league,  
 Half a league onward,  
 All in the valley of Death  
     Rode the six hundred.  
 "Forward the Light Brigade !  
 Charge for the guns !" he said.  
 Into the valley of Death  
     Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade !"  
 Was there a man dismay'd ?  
 Not tho' the soldier knew  
     Some one had blunder'd.  
 Theirs not to make reply,  
 Theirs not to reason why,  
 Theirs but to do and die.  
 Into the valley of Death  
     Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon in front of them  
     Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
 Boldly they rode and well,  
 Into the jaws of Death,  
 Into the mouth of hell  
     Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
 Flash'd as they turn'd in air

<sup>1</sup> "On Dec. 21 he wrote the *Charge of the Light Brigade* in a few minutes, after reading the description in the *Times* in which occurred the phrase 'Some one had blundered,' and this was the origin of the metre of his poem." (*Life* I, 381.)

Sabring the gunners there,  
 Charging an army, while  
     All the world wonder'd.  
 Plunged in the battery-smoke  
 Right thro' the line they broke ;  
 Cossack and Russian  
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke  
     Shatter'd and sunder'd.  
 Then they rode back, but not,  
     Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon behind them  
     Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
 While horse and hero fell,  
 They that had fought so well,  
 Came thro' the jaws of Death  
 Back from the mouth of hell,  
 All that was left of them,  
     Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?  
 O the wild charge they made !  
     All the world wonder'd.  
 Honor the charge they made !  
 Honor the Light Brigade,  
     Noble six hundred !

December 9, 1854.

#### THE BROOK

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,  
 I make a sudden sally,  
 And sparkle out among the fern,  
 To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,  
 Or slip between the ridges,  
 By twenty thorps, a little town,  
     And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow  
 To join the brimming river,  
 For men may come and men may go  
     But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways,  
 In little sharps and trebles,  
 I bubble into eddying bays,  
     I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret  
 By many a field and fallow,  
 And many a fairy foreland set  
     With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery water-break  
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
I slide by hazel covers;  
I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,  
Among my skimming swallows;  
I make the netted sunbeam dance  
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars  
In brambly wildernesses;  
I linger by my shingly bars,  
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever. 1855.

#### LYRICS FROM MAUD<sup>1</sup>

##### PART I

##### V

**V**oice by the cedar tree  
The meadow under the Hall!  
He is singing an air that is known to  
me,  
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
A martial song like a trumpet's call!  
Singing alone in the morning of life,  
The happy morning of life and of May,  
Singing of men that in battle array,  
Lead in heart and ready in hand,  
March with banner and bugle and fife  
To the death, for their native land.

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson, I, 393-406.

Maud with her exquisite face,  
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny  
sky,  
And feet like sunny gems on an English  
green,  
Maud in the light of her youth and her  
grace,  
Singing of Death, and of Honor that  
cannot die,  
Till I well could weep for a time so sor-  
did and mean,  
And myself so languid and base.

Silence, beautiful voice!  
Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
A glory I shall not find.  
Still! I will hear you no more,  
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a  
choice  
But to move to the meadow and fall be-  
fore  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,  
Not her, not her, but a voice.

##### XI

O, let the solid ground  
Not fail beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
What some have found so sweet!  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite quite sure  
That there is one to love me!  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

##### XII

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling.

Where was Maud? in our wood:  
And I—who else?—was with her,  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together.

Birds in our wood sang  
Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
In among the lilies.

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
She took the kiss sedately;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
But she is tall and stately.

I to cry out on pride  
Who have won her favor!  
O, Maud were sure of heaven  
If lowliness could save her!

I know the way she went  
Home with her maiden posy,  
For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
And left the daisies rosy.

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud?  
One is come to woo her.

Look, a horse at the door,  
And little King Charley snarling!  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
You are not her darling.

## XVII

Go not, happy day,  
From the shining fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
Till the maiden yields.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.  
When the happy Yes  
Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news  
Over glowing ships;  
Over blowing seas,  
Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
Blush it thro' the West;  
Till the red man dance  
By his red cedar-tree,  
And the red man's babe  
Leap, beyond the sea.  
Blush from West to East,  
Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East,  
Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

## XVIII

I have led her home, my love, my only  
friend.  
There is none like her, none.

And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
And sweetly, on and on  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,  
Full to the banks, close on the promised  
good.

None like her, none.  
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the garden  
walk,  
And shook my heart to think she comes  
once more.  
But even then I heard her close the door;  
The gates of heaven are closed, and she  
is gone.

There is none like her, none,  
Nor will be when our summers have de-  
ceased.  
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon  
In the long breeze that streams to thy  
delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here in-  
creased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head  
Of her whose gentle will has changed my  
fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-  
flame:  
And over whom thy darkness must have  
spread  
With such delight as theirs of old, thy  
great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden,  
there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from  
whom she came?

Here will I lie, while these long branches  
sway, [da  
And you fair stars that crown a happy  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn  
As when it seem'd far better to be born  
To labor and the mattock-harden'd harrow  
Than nursed at ease and brought to  
understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron  
skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and  
brand  
His nothingness into man.

ine on, and what care I  
s stormy gulf have found a  
charm of space and hollow  
ept my madness, and would  
om some slight shame one  
e girl?—

for sullen-seeming Death  
give  
Love than is or ever was  
world, where yet 't is sweet  
e.  
ask me how it came to pass ;  
at I am happy, that to me  
nerald twinkles in the grass,  
phire melts into the sea.

live a life of truest breath,  
ue life to fight with mortal  
gs.  
uld Love, like men in drink-  
ngs,  
ir banquet with the dust of  
?  
r, Maud my bliss,  
my Maud by that long loving  
life, wilt thou not answer  
y strand of Death inwoven  
Love's tie, makes Love him-  
more dear."

wanted moan only the swell  
; waves that roll in yonder  
the clock within, the silver  
weet hours that past in bridal  
to live, long as my pulses  
this my love has closed her  
false death her hand, and  
away  
il wastes where footless fan-  
well  
fragments of the golden  
g there her maiden grace  
ht!  
I feel with thee the drowsy  
be, my evermore delight,

My own heart's heart, my ownest own,  
farewell ;  
It is but for a little space I go.  
And ye meanwhile far over moor and  
fell  
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !  
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the  
glow  
Of your soft splendors that you look so  
bright ?  
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely hell.  
Beat, happy stars, timing with things  
below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than  
heart can tell,  
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent  
woe [so ;  
That seems to draw—but it shall not be  
Let all be well, be well.

## XXI

Rivulet crossing my ground,  
And bringing me down from the Hall  
This garden-rose that I found,  
Forgetful of Maud and me,  
And lost in trouble and moving round  
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
And trying to pass to the sea ;  
O rivulet, born at the Hall,  
My Maud has sent it by thee—  
If I read her sweet will right—  
On a blushing mission to me.  
Saying in odor and color, " Ah be  
Among the roses to-night."

## XXII

Come into the garden, Maud.  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone ;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted  
abroad,  
And the musk of the rose is blown.  
For a breeze of morning moves,  
And the planet of love is on high,  
Beginning to faint in the light that she  
loves  
On a bed of daffodil sky,  
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,  
To faint in his light, and to die.  
All night have the roses heard  
The flute, violin, bassoon ;  
All night has the casement jessamine  
stirr'd  
To the dancers dancing in tune ;  
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one,  
 With whom she has heart to be gay.  
 When will the dancers leave her alone?  
 She is weary of dance and play."  
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
 And half to the rising day;  
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone  
 The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes  
 In babble and revel and wine.  
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,  
 For one that will never be thine?  
 But mine, but mine," so I swore to the  
 rose,  
 "For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my  
 blood,  
 As the music clash'd in the Hall;  
 And long by the garden lake I stood,  
 For I heard your rivulet fall  
 From the lake to the meadow and on to  
 the wood,  
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left  
 so sweet  
 That whenever a March-wind sighs  
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
 In violets blue as your eyes,  
 To the woody hollows in which we  
 meet  
 And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake  
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
 The white lake-blossom fell into the  
 lake  
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;  
 But the rose was awake all night for  
 your sake,  
 Knowing your promise to me;  
 The lilies and roses were all awake,  
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of  
 girls.  
 Come hither, the dances are done,  
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls.  
 Queen lily and rose in one; [curls,  
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with  
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear  
 From the passion-flower at the gate,  
 She is coming, my dove, my dear;  
 She is coming, my life, my fate.  
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is  
 near;"

And the white rose weeps, "She is  
 late;"  
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"  
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;  
 Were it ever so airy a tread,  
 My heart would hear her and beat,  
 Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
 My dust would hear her and beat,  
 Had I lain for a century dead,  
 Would start and tremble under her feet,  
 And blossom in purple and red.

## PART II

## II

SEE what a lovely shell,  
 Small and pure as a pearl,  
 Lying close to my foot,  
 Frail, but a work divine,  
 Made so fairly well  
 With delicate spire and whorl,  
 How exquisitely minute,  
 A miracle of design!

What is it? a learned man  
 Could give it a clumsy name.  
 Let him name it who can,  
 The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,  
 Void of the little living will  
 That made it stir on the shore.  
 Did he stand at the diamond door  
 Of his house in a rainbow frill?  
 Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,  
 A golden foot or a fairy horn  
 Thro' his dim water-world?

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap  
 Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
 Small, but a work divine,  
 Frail, but of force to withstand,  
 Year upon year, the shock  
 Of cataract seas that snap  
 The three-decker's oaken spine  
 Athwart the ledges of rock,  
 Here on the Breton strand!

Breton, not Briton: here  
 Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
 Of ancient fable and fear—  
 Plagued with a flitting to and fro,  
 A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
 That never came from on high  
 Nor ever arose from below,  
 But only moves with the moving eye,  
 Flying along the land and the main—

ould it look like Maud?  
o be overawed  
at I cannot but know  
ggle born of the brain?

rom the Breton coast,  
f a nameless fear,  
o the dark sea-line  
g, thinking of all I have lost;  
l song vexes my ear,  
at of Lamech is mine.

ars, a measureless ill,  
ars, for ever, to part—  
e, she would love me still;  
s long, O God, as she  
a grain of love for me,  
g, no doubt, no doubt,  
nurse in my dark heart,  
er weary, a spark of will  
be trampled out.

ge, that the mind, when fraught  
a passion so intense  
ould think that it well  
drown all life in the eye.—  
t should, by being so overwrought,  
nly strike on a sharper sense  
shell, or a flower, little things  
else would have been past by!  
ow I remember, I,  
he lay dying there,  
ed one of his many rings—  
e had many, poor worm — and  
thought,  
is mother's hair.

nows if he be dead?  
er I need have fled?  
guilty of blood?  
er this may be,  
rt her, comfort her, all things  
good,

I am over the sea!  
e and my passionate love go by,  
eak to her all things holy and  
high,  
er happen to me!  
d my harmful love go by;  
me to her waking, find her asleep.  
s of the height, Powers of the  
deep.  
omfort her tho' I die!

## IV

't were possible  
long grief and pain  
i the arms of my true love  
me once again!

When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee.  
Ah, Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell  
us  
What and where they be!

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

'T is a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendor falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls;  
'T is a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet.

She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet.  
She is singing in the meadow,  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden a passionate  
cry.

There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,  
And I wake, my dream is fled.  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold!



Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about !  
'T is the blot upon the brain  
That *will* show itself without.

Then I rise, the eave-drops fall,  
And the yellow vapors choke  
The great city sounding wide ;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame ;  
It crosses here, it crosses there,  
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,  
The shadow still the same ;  
And on my heavy eyelids  
My anguish hangs like shame.

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,  
In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall !

Would the happy spirit descend  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say " Forgive the wrong,"  
Or to ask her, " Take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest " ?

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow flits and fleets  
And will not let me be ;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me.  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee. 1855.

#### WILL

O, WELL for him whose will is strong !  
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;  
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong.  
For him nor moves the loud world's  
random mock,  
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-  
found,  
Who seems a promontory of rock,

That, compass'd round with turbulent  
sound,  
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,  
Tempest-buffed, citadel-crown'd.

But ill for him who, bettering not with  
time,  
Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-  
scended Will,  
And ever weaker grows thro' acted  
crime,  
Or seeming-genial venial fault.  
Recurring and suggesting still !  
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,  
Toiling in immeasurable sand,  
And o'er a weary sultry land,  
Far beneath a blazing vault,  
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous  
hill,  
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.  
1855.

#### ENID'S SONG

TURN, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and  
lower the proud ;  
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine,  
storm, and cloud ;  
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor  
hate.

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with  
smile or frown ;  
With that wild wheel we go not up or  
down ;  
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are  
great.

Smile and we smile, the lords of many  
lands ;  
Frown and we smile, the lords of our  
own hands ;  
For man is man and master of his fate.

Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring  
crowd ;  
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the  
cloud ;  
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor  
hate.

From the *Marriage of Geraint*, 1859.

#### VIVIEN'S SONG

In love, if love be love, if love be ours.  
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal  
powers :  
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all

the little rift within the lute,  
; by and by will make the music  
mute,  
ever widening slowly silence all.

little rift within the lover's lute,  
little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,  
; rotting inward slowly moulders all.

not worth the keeping; let it go:  
shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.  
trust me not at all or all in all.  
From *Merlin and Vivien*, 1859.

ELAINE'S SONG

ET is true love tho' given in vain, in  
vain;  
sweet is death who puts an end to  
pain.  
ow not which is sweeter, no, not I.

, art thou sweet? then bitter death  
must be.  
, thou art bitter; sweet is death to  
me.  
ve, if death be sweeter, let me die.

st love, that seems not made to fade  
away;  
st death, that seems to make us love-  
less clay;  
ow not which is sweeter, no, not I.

n would follow love, if that could  
be;  
ds must follow death, who calls for  
me;  
and I follow, I follow! let me die.  
From *Lancelot and Elaine*, 1859.

GUINEVERE

EN GUINEVERE had fled the court,  
and sat  
e in the holy house at Almesbury  
ping, none with her save a little  
maid,  
vice. One low light betwixt them  
burn'd  
r'd by the creeping mist, for all  
abroad,  
ath a moon unseen albeit at full,  
white mist, like a face-cloth to the  
face,  
g to the dead earth, and the land  
was still.  
r hither had she fled, her cause of  
flight

Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast  
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the  
throne,  
Ready to spring, waiting a chance. For  
this  
He chill'd the popular praises of the  
King  
With silent smiles of slow disparage-  
ment;  
And tamper'd with the Lords of the  
White Horse,  
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left; and  
sought  
To make disruption in the Table Round  
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds  
Serving his traitorous end; and all his  
aims  
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for Lance-  
lot.

For thus it chanced one morn when all  
the court,  
Green-suited, but with plumes that  
mock'd the May,  
Had been—their wont—a-maying and  
return'd,  
That Modred still in green, all ear and  
eye,  
Climb'd to the high top of the garden-  
wall  
To spy some secret scandal if he might,  
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt her  
best  
Enid and lissome Vivien, of her court  
The wildest and the worst; and more  
than this  
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by  
Spied where he couch'd, and as the gar-  
dener's hand  
Picks from the colewort a green cater-  
pillar,  
So from the high wall and the flowering  
grove  
Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the  
heel,  
And cast him as a worm upon the way;  
But when he knew the prince tho'  
marr'd with dust,  
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad  
man,  
Made such excuses as he might, and  
these  
Full knightly without scorn. For in  
those days  
No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in  
scorn;  
But, if a man were halt, or hunch'd, in  
By those whom God had made full-  
limb'd and tall,

Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,  
 And he was answer'd softly by the King  
 And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help  
 To raise the prince, who rising twice or  
 thrice  
 Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled,  
 and went;  
 But, ever after, the small violence done  
 Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,  
 As the sharp wind that ruffles all day  
 long  
 A little bitter pool about a stone  
 On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told  
 This matter to the Queen, at first she  
 laugh'd  
 Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,  
 Then shudder'd, as the village wife who  
 cries,  
 "I shudder, some one steps across my  
 grave:"  
 Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for in-  
 deed  
 She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,  
 Would track her guilt until he found,  
 and hers  
 Would be for evermore a name of scorn.  
 Henceforward rarely could she front in  
 hall,  
 Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,  
 Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent  
 eye.  
 Henceforward too, the Powers that tend  
 the soul,  
 To help it from the death that cannot  
 die,  
 And save it even in extremes, began  
 To vex and plague her. Many a time for  
 hours,  
 Beside the placid breathings of the King,  
 In the dead night, grim faces came and  
 went  
 Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—  
 Like to some doubtful noise of creaking  
 doors,  
 Heard by the watcher in a haunted  
 house,  
 That keeps the rust of murder on the  
 walls—  
 Held her awake; or if she slept she  
 dream'd [stand  
 An awful dream, for then she seem'd to  
 On some vast plain before a setting sun,  
 And from the sun there swiftly made at  
 her  
 A ghastly something, and its shadow flew  
 Before it till it touch'd her, and she  
 turn'd—

When lo! her own, that broadening  
 from her feet,  
 And blackening, swallow'd all the land,  
 and in it  
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she  
 woke.  
 And all this trouble did not pass but  
 grew,  
 Till even the clear face of the guileless  
 King,  
 And trustful courtesies of household life,  
 Became her bane; and at the last she  
 said:  
 "O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine  
 own land,  
 For if thou tarry we shall meet again,  
 And if we meet again some evil chance  
 Will make the smouldering scandal  
 break and blaze  
 Before the people and our lord the King."  
 And Lancelot ever promised, but re-  
 main'd  
 And still they met and met. Again she  
 said,  
 "O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee  
 hence."  
 And then they were agreed upon a  
 night—  
 When the good Kings should not be there  
 —to meet  
 And part for ever. Vivien, lurking,  
 heard.  
 She told Sir Modred. Passion-pale they  
 met  
 And greeted. Hands in hands, and eye  
 to eye,  
 Low on the border of her couch they sat  
 Stammering and staring. It was their  
 last hour,  
 A madness of farewells. And Modred  
 brought  
 His creatures to the basement of the  
 tower  
 For testimony; and crying with full  
 voice,  
 "Traitor, come out, ye are trapped at  
 last," aroused  
 Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike  
 Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong,  
 and he fell  
 Stunn'd and his creatures took and bare  
 him off,  
 And all was still. Then she, "The end  
 is come,  
 And I am shamed for ever;" and he  
 said:  
 "Mine be the shame, mine was the sin;  
 but rise,  
 And fly to my strong castle over-seas.

There will I hide thee till my life shall end,  
 There hold thee with my life against the world."  
 She answer'd: "Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so?  
 Nay, friend, for we have taken our farewells.  
 Would God that thou couldst hide me from myself!  
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou  
 Unwedded; yet rise now, and let us fly,  
 For I will draw me into sanctuary,  
 And bide my doom." So Lancelot got her horse,  
 Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,  
 And then they rode to the divided way,  
 There kiss'd, and parted weeping; for he passed,  
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,  
 Back to his land; but she to Almesbury  
 Fleed all night long by glimmering waste and weald,  
 And heard the spirits of the waste and weald  
 Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan.  
 And in herself she moan'd, "Too late, too late!"  
 Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn,  
 A blot in heaven, the raven, flying high,  
 Croak'd, and she thought, "He spies a field of death;  
 For now the heathen of the Northern Sea,  
 Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court,  
 Begin to slay the folk and spoil the land."

And when she came to Almesbury she spake  
 There to the nuns, and said, "Mine enemies  
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,  
 Receive and yield me sanctuary, nor ask  
 Her name to whom ye yield it till her time  
 To tell you;" and her beauty, grace, and power  
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared  
 To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode  
 For many a week, unknown, among the nuns,

Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,  
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,  
 But communed only with the little maid,  
 Who pleased her with a babbling heedlessness  
 Which often lured her from herself; but now,  
 This night, a rumor wildly blown about  
 Came that Sir Modred had usurp'd the realm  
 And leagued him with the heathen, while the King  
 Was waging war on Lancelot. Then she thought,  
 "With what a hate the people and the King  
 Must hate me," and bow'd down upon her hands  
 Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd  
 No silence, brake it, uttering "Late! so late!  
 What, hour, I wonder now?" and when she drew  
 No answer, by and by began to hum  
 An air the nuns had taught her: "Late, so late!"  
 Which when she heard, the Queen look'd up and said,  
 "O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,  
 Sing, and unbind my heart that I may weep."  
 Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

"Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!  
 Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.  
 Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light had we; for that we do repent,  
 And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.  
 Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light! so late! and dark and chill the night!  
 O, let us in, that we may find the light!  
 Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet!  
 O, let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!  
 No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."

So sang the novice, while full passionately,  
 Her head upon her hands, remembering  
 Her thought when first she came, wept the sad Queen.  
 Then said the little novice, prattling to her:

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no more;  
 But let my words—the words of one so small,  
 Who knowing nothing knows but to obey,  
 And if I do not there is penance given—  
 Comfort your sorrows, for they do not flow  
 From evil done; right sure am I of that.  
 Who sees your tender grace and state-  
 liness.  
 But weigh your sorrows with our lord  
 the King's,  
 And weighing find them less; for gone  
 is he  
 To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot  
 there,  
 Round that strong castle where he holds  
 the Queen;  
 And Modred whom he left in charge of  
 all,  
 The traitor—Ah, sweet lady, the King's  
 grief  
 For his own self, and his own Queen  
 and realm,  
 Must needs be thrice as great as any of  
 ours!  
 For me, I thank the saints, I am not  
 great;  
 For if there ever come a grief to me  
 I cry my cry in silence, and have done;  
 None knows it, and my tears have  
 brought me good.  
 But even were the griefs of little ones  
 As great as those of great ones, yet this  
 grief  
 Is added to the griefs the great must  
 bear,  
 That, howsoever much they may desire  
 Silence, they cannot weep behind a  
 cloud;  
 As even here they talk at Almesbury  
 About the good King and his wicked  
 Queen,  
 And were I such a King with such a  
 Queen,  
 Well might I wish to veil her wicked-  
 ness,  
 But were I such a King it could not be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd  
 the Queen,  
 "Will the child kill me with her inno-  
 cent talk?"  
 But openly she answer'd, "Must not I,  
 If this false traitor have displaced his  
 lord, [realm?]  
 Grieve with the common grief of all the

"Yea," said the maid, "that all is  
 woman's grief,  
 That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life  
 Hath wrought confusion in the Table  
 Round  
 Which good King Arthur founded, years  
 ago,  
 With signs and miracles and wonders,  
 there  
 At Camelot, ere the coming of the  
 Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-  
 self again,  
 "Will the child kill me with her foolish  
 prate?"  
 But openly she spake and said to her,  
 "O little maid, shut in by nunnery  
 walls,  
 What canst thou know of Kings and  
 Tables Round,  
 Or what of signs and wonders, but the  
 signs  
 And simple miracles of thy nunnery?"

To whom the little novice garrulously:  
 "Yea, but I know; the land was full of  
 signs  
 And wonders ere the coming of the  
 Queen,  
 So said my father, and himself was  
 knight  
 Of the great Table—at the founding of  
 it,  
 And rode thereto from Lyonesse; and  
 he said  
 That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain  
 After the sunset, down the coast, he  
 heard  
 Strange music, and he paused, and turn-  
 ing—there,  
 All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,  
 Each with a beacon-star upon his head,  
 And with a wild sea-light about his feet,  
 He saw them—headland after headland  
 flame  
 Far on into the rich heart of the west.  
 And in the light the white mermaiden  
 swam,  
 And strong man-breasted things stood  
 from the sea,  
 And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the  
 land,  
 To which the little elves of chasm and  
 cleft  
 Made answer, sounding like a distant  
 horn.  
 So said my father—yea, and further-  
 more,

Next morning, while he past the dim-lit  
woods  
Himself beheld three spirits mad with  
joy  
Come dashing down on a tall wayside  
flower,  
That shook beneath them as the thistle  
shakes  
When three gray linnets wrangle for the  
seed.  
And still at evenings on before his  
horse  
The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and  
broke  
Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd  
and broke  
Flying, for all the land was full of life.  
And when at last he came to Camelot,  
A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand  
Swung round the lighted lantern of the  
hall;  
And in the hall itself was such a feast  
As never man had dream'd; for every  
knight  
Had whatsoever meat he long'd for  
served  
By hands unseen; and even as he said  
Down in the cellars merry bloated things  
Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the  
butts  
While the wine ran; so glad were spirits  
and men  
Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen and somewhat  
bitterly,  
"Were they so glad? ill prophets were  
they all,  
Spirits and men. Could none of them  
foresee,  
Not even thy wise father with his signs  
And wonders, what has fallen upon the  
realm?"

To whom the novice garrulously  
again:  
"Yea, one, a bard, of whom my father  
said,  
Full many a noble war-song had he sung,  
Even in the presence of an enemy's  
fleet,  
Between the steep cliff and the coming  
wave;  
And many a mystic lay of life and  
death  
Had chanted on the smoky mountain-  
tops,  
When round him bent the spirits of the  
hills

With all their dewy hair blown back  
like flame.  
So said my father—and that night the  
bard  
Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang  
the King  
As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd  
at those  
Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois.  
For there was no man knew from  
whence he came;  
But after tempest, when the long wave  
broke  
All down the thundering shores of Bude  
and Bos,  
There came a day as still as heaven, and  
then  
They found a naked child upon the  
sands  
Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea,  
And that was Arthur, and they foster'd  
him  
Till he by miracle was approven King;  
And that his grave should be a mystery  
From all men, like his birth; and could  
he find  
A woman in her womanhood as great  
As he was in his manhood, then, he  
sang,  
The twain together well might change  
the world.  
But even in the middle of his song  
He falter'd, and his hand fell from the  
harp,  
And pale he turn'd and reel'd, and would  
have fallen,  
But that they stay'd him up; nor would  
he tell  
His vision; but what doubt that he fore-  
saw  
This evil work of Lancelot and the  
Queen?"

Then thought the Queen, "Lo! they  
have set her on,  
Our simple-seeming abbess and her nuns,  
To play upon me," and bow'd her head  
nor spake.  
Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd  
hands,  
Shame on her own garrulity garrulously.  
Said the good nuns would check her  
gadding tongue  
Full often, "and, sweet lady, if I seem  
To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,  
Unmannerly, with prattling and the  
tales  
Which my good father told me, check  
me too

Nor let me shame my father's memory,  
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would  
 say  
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he  
 died,  
 Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers  
 back,  
 And left me; but of others who remain,  
 And of the two first-famed for cour-  
 tesy—  
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss—  
 But pray you, which had noblest, while  
 you moved  
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the  
 King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and  
 answer'd her :  
 "Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,  
 Was gracious to all ladies, and the same  
 In open battle or the tilting-field  
 Forbore his own advantage, and the  
 King  
 In open battle or the tilting-field  
 Forbore his own advantage, and these  
 two  
 Were the most nobly manner'd men of  
 all ;  
 For manners are not idle, but the fruit  
 Of loyal nature and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners  
 such fair fruit?  
 Then Lancelot's needs must be a thou-  
 sand-fold  
 Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,  
 The most disloyal friend in all the  
 world."

To which a mournful answer made  
 the Queen :  
 "O, closed about by narrowing nunnery-  
 walls,  
 What knowest thou of the world and all  
 its lights  
 And shadows, all the wealth and all the  
 woe?  
 If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,  
 Were for one hour less noble than him-  
 self,  
 Pray for him that he scape the doom of  
 fire,  
 And weep for her who drew him to his  
 doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray  
 for both ;  
 But I should all as soon believe that his,

Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the  
 King's,  
 As I could think, sweet lady, yours  
 would be  
 Such as they are, were you the sinful  
 Queen."

So she, like many another babbler,  
 hurt  
 Whom she would soothe, and harm'd  
 where she would heal :  
 For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat  
 Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who  
 cried :

"Such as thou art be never maiden more  
 For ever ! thou their tool, set on to  
 plague

And play upon and harry me, petty spy  
 And traitress !" When that storm of  
 anger brake

From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,  
 White as her veil, and stood before the  
 Queen

As tremulously as foam upon the beach  
 Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,  
 And when the Queen had added, "Get  
 thee hence !"

Fled frighted. Then that other left  
 alone

Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,  
 Saying in herself : "The simple, fearful  
 child

Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful  
 guilt.

Simpler than any child, betrays itself.  
 But help me, Heaven, for surely I re-  
 pent !

For what is true repentance but in  
 thought—

Not even in inmost thought to think  
 again

The sins that made the past so pleasant  
 to us ?

And I have sworn never to see him more,  
 To see him more."

And even in saying this,  
 Her memory from old habit of the mind  
 Went slipping back upon the golden days  
 In which she saw him first, when Lan-  
 celot came,

Reputed the best knight and goodliest  
 man,

Ambassador, to yield her to his lord  
 Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead  
 Of his and her retinue moving, they,  
 Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love  
 And sport and tilts and pleasure,—for  
 the time

Was may-time, and as yet no sin was  
dream'd,—

Rode under groves that look'd a paradise  
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth  
That seem'd the heavens upbreking  
thro' the earth,

And on from hill to hill, and every day  
Beheld at noon in some delicious dale  
The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised  
For brief repast or afternoon repose  
By couriers gone before; and on again,  
Till yet once more ere set of sun they  
saw

The Dragon of the great Pendragonship,  
That crown'd the state pavilion of the  
King,  
Blaze by the rushing brook or silent  
well.

But when the Queen immersed in such  
a trance,  
And moving thro' the past unconscious-  
ly,  
Came to that point where first she saw  
the King  
Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to  
find  
Her journey done, glanced at him,  
thought him cold,  
High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not  
like him,  
“Not like my Lancelot”—while she  
brooded thus  
And grew half-guilty in her thoughts  
again,  
There rode an armed warrior to the  
doors.  
A murmuring whisper thro' the nunnery  
ran,  
Then on a sudden a cry, “The King!”  
She sat  
Stiff-stricken, listening; but when armed  
feet  
Thro' the long gallery from the outer  
doors  
Rang coming, prone from off her seat  
she fell,  
And grovell'd with her face against the  
floor.  
There with her milk-white arms and  
shadowy hair  
She made her face a darkness from the  
King,  
And in the darkness heard his armed feet  
Pause by her; then came silence, then a  
voice,  
Monotonous and hollow like a ghost's  
Denouncing judgment, but, though  
changed, the King's:

“Liest thou here so low, the child of  
one

I honor'd, happy, dead before thy shame?  
Well is it that no child is born of thee.

The children born of thee are sword and  
fire,

Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,  
The craft of kindred and the godless  
hosts

Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern  
Sea;

Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my  
right arm.

The mightiest of my knights, abode with  
me,

Have everywhere about this land of  
Christ

In twelve great battles ruining over-  
thrown.

And knowest thou now from whence I  
come—from him,

From waging bitter war with him; and  
he,

That did not shun to smite me in worse  
way,

Had yet that grace of courtesy in him  
left,

He spared to lift his hand against the  
King

Who made him knight. But many a  
knight was slain;

And many more and all his kith and  
kin

Clave to him, and abode in his own land.  
And many more when Modred raised

revolt,  
Forgetful of their troth and fealty, clave

To Modred, and a remnant stays with  
me.

And of this remnant will I leave a part,  
True men who love me still, for whom I

live,  
To guard thee in the wild hour coming

on,  
Lest but a hair of this low head be

harm'd.  
Fear not; thou shalt be guarded till my

death.  
Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies

Have err'd not, that I march to meet my  
doom.

Thou hast not made my life so sweet to  
me,

That I the King should greatly care to  
live;

For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my  
life.

Bear with me for the last time while I  
show,



Even for thy sake, the sin which thou  
hast sinn'd. [law  
For when the Roman left us, and their  
Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways  
Were fill'd with rapine, here and there  
a deed  
Of prowess done redress'd a random  
wrong,  
But I was first of all the kings who drew  
The knighthood-errant of this realm and  
all  
The realms together under me, their  
Head,  
In that fair Order of my Table Round,  
A glorious company, the flower of men,  
To serve as model for the mighty world,  
And be the fair beginning of a time.  
I made them lay their hands in mine  
and swear  
To reverence the King, as if he were  
Their conscience, and their conscience  
as their King,  
To break the heathen and uphold the  
Christ,  
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,  
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,  
To honor his own word as if his God's,  
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,  
And worship her by years of noble deeds,  
Until they won her; for indeed I knew  
Of no more subtle master under heaven  
Than is the maiden passion for a maid.  
Not only to keep down the base in man,  
But teach high thought, and amiable  
words  
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,  
And love of truth, and all that makes a  
man.  
And all this throve before I wedded thee,  
Believing, "Lo, mine helpmate, one to  
feel  
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy!"  
Then came thy shameful sin with Lance-  
lot:  
Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt;  
Then others, following these my  
mightiest knights,  
And drawing foul ensample from fair  
names,  
Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite  
Of all my heart had destined did obtain,  
And all thro' thee! so that this life of  
mine  
I guard as God's high gift from scathe  
and wrong,  
Not greatly care to lose; but rather think  
How sad it were for Arthur, should he  
live,

To sit once more within his lonely hall,  
And miss the wonted number of my  
knights,  
And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds  
As in the golden days before thy sin.  
For which of us who might be left could  
speak  
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at  
thee?  
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk  
Thy shadow still would glide from room  
to room,  
And I should evermore be vext with thee  
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,  
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.  
For think not, tho' thou wouldst not  
love thy lord,  
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for  
thee.  
I am not made of so slight elements.  
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy  
shame.  
I hold that man the worst of public foes  
Who either for his own or children's  
sake,  
To save his blood from scandal, lets the  
wife  
Whom he knows false abide and rule  
the house:  
For being thro' his cowardice allow'd  
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,  
She like a new disease, unknown to men,  
Creeps, no precaution used, among the  
crowd,  
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and  
saps  
The fealty of our friends, and stirs the  
pulse  
With devil's leaps, and poisons half the  
young.  
Worst of the worst were that man he  
that reigns!  
Better the King's waste hearth and  
aching heart  
Than thou reseatd in thy place of light.  
The mockery of my people and their  
bane!"

He paused, and in the pause she crept  
an inch  
Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.  
Far off a solitary trumpet blew  
Then waiting by the doors the war-horse  
neigh'd  
As at a friend's voice, and he spake  
again:

"Yet think not that I come to urge  
thy crimes;

I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,  
 I, whose vast pity almost makes me die  
 To see thee, laying there thy golden head,  
 My pride in happier summers, at my feet.  
 The wrath which forced my thoughts on  
 that fierce law,  
 The doom of treason and the flaming  
 death,—  
 When first I learned thee hidden here,—  
 is past.  
 The pang—which, while I weigh'd thy  
 heart with one  
 Too wholly true to dream untruth in  
 thee,  
 Made my tears burn—is also past—in  
 part.  
 And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,  
 Lo, I forgive thee, as Eternal God  
 Forgives! do thou for thine own soul the  
 rest.  
 But how to take last leave of all I loved?  
 O golden hair, with which I used to play  
 Not knowing! O imperial-moulded  
 form,  
 And beauty such as never woman wore,  
 Until it came a kingdom's curse with  
 thee—  
 I cannot touch thy lips, they are not  
 mine,  
 But Lancelot's; nay, they never were  
 the King's.  
 I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,  
 And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and  
 mine own flesh.  
 Here looking down on thine polluted,  
 cries,  
 'I loathe thee;' yet not less, O Guine-  
 vere,  
 For I was ever virgin save for thee,  
 My love thro' flesh hath wrought into  
 my life  
 So far that my doom is, I love thee still.  
 Let no man dream but that I love thee  
 still.  
 Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,  
 And so thou lean on our fair father  
 Christ.  
 Hereafter in that world where all are  
 pure  
 We two may meet before high God, and  
 thou  
 Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,  
 and know  
 I am thine husband—not a smaller soul.  
 Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me  
 that.  
 I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I  
 hence. [blow]  
 Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet

They summon me their King to lead  
 mine hosts  
 Far down to that great battle in the west,  
 Where I must strike against the man  
 they call  
 My sister's son—no kin of mine, who  
 leagues  
 With Lords of the White Horse, heathen,  
 and knights,  
 Traitors—and strike him dead, and meet  
 myself  
 Death, or I know not what mysterious  
 doom.  
 And thou remaining here wilt learn the  
 event;  
 But hither shall I never come again,  
 Never lie by thy side, see thee no more—  
 Farewell!"

And while she grovelling at his feet,  
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er  
 her neck,  
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen head  
 Perceived the waving of his hands that  
 blessed.

Then, listening till those armed steps  
 were gone,  
 Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish  
 found  
 The casement: "peradventure," so she  
 thought,  
 "If I might see his face, and not be  
 seen."  
 And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!  
 And near him the sad nuns with each a  
 light  
 Stood, and he gave them charge about  
 the Queen,  
 To guard and foster her for evermore.  
 And while he spake to these his helm  
 was lower'd,  
 To which for crest the golden dragon  
 clung  
 Of Britain; so she did not see the face,  
 Which then was as an angel's, but she  
 saw,  
 Wet with the mists and smitten by the  
 lights,  
 The Dragon of the great Pendragonship  
 Blaze, making all the night a steam of  
 fire.  
 And even then he turn'd; and more and  
 more  
 The moony vapor rolling round the King,  
 Who seem'd the phantom of a giant in  
 it,  
 Enwound him fold by fold, and made  
 him gray

And grayer, till himself became as mist  
Before her, moving ghostlike to his  
doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and  
cried aloud,  
"O Arthur!" there her voice brake sud-  
denly,  
Then—as a stream that spouting from a  
cliff  
Falls in mid air, but gathering at the  
base  
Re-makes itself, and flashes down the  
vale—  
Went on in passionate utterance:

"Gone—my lord!  
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain!  
And he forgave me, and I could not  
speak.  
Farewell? I should have answer'd his  
farewell.  
His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord  
the King,  
My own true lord! how dare I call him  
mine?  
The shadow of another cleaves to me,  
And makes me one pollution. He, the  
King,  
Call'd me polluted. Shall I kill myself?  
What help in that? I cannot kill my  
sin,  
If soul be soul, nor can I kill my shame;  
No, nor by living can I live it down.  
The days will grow to weeks, the weeks  
to months,  
The months will add themselves and  
make the years,  
The years will roll into the centuries,  
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.  
I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.  
Let the world be; that is but of the  
world—  
What else? what hope? I think there  
was a hope,  
Except he mock'd me when he spake of  
hope:  
His hope he call'd it; but he never  
mocks,  
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.  
And blessed be the King, who hath for-  
given  
My wickedness to him, and left me hope  
That in mine own heart I can live down  
sin  
And be his mate hereafter in the heavens  
Before high God! Ah great and gentle  
lord,  
Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint

Among his warring senses, to thy  
knights—  
To whom my false voluptuous pride,  
that took  
Full easily all impressions from below,  
Would not look up, or half-despised the  
height  
To which I would not or I could not  
climb—  
I thought I could not breathe in that  
fine air,  
That pure severity of perfect light—  
I yearn'd for warmth and color which I  
found  
In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou  
art,  
Thou art the highest and most human  
too,  
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there  
none  
Will tell the King I love him tho' so  
late?  
Now—ere he goes to the great battle?  
none!  
Myself must tell him in that purer life.  
But now it were too daring. Ah my God.  
What might I not have made of thy fair  
world,  
Had I but loved thy highest creature  
here?  
It was my duty to have loved the  
highest;  
It surely was my profit had I known;  
It would have been my pleasure had I  
seen.  
We needs must love the highest when  
we see it,  
Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand  
Grasp'd made her veil her eyes. She  
look'd and saw  
The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said  
to her,  
"Yea, little maid, for am I not for-  
given?"  
Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns  
All round her, weeping; and her heart  
was loosed  
Within her, and she wept with these  
and said:

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,  
who broke  
The vast design and purpose of the King.  
O, shut me round with narrowing nun-  
nery walls,  
Meek maidens, from the voices crying,  
'Shame!'

I must not scorn myself; he loves me still.  
 Let no one dream but that he loves me still.  
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me,  
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with you;  
 Wear black and white, and be a nun like you,  
 Fast with your fasts, not feasting with your feasts;  
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at your joys,  
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your rites;  
 Pray and be pray'd for; lie before your shrines;  
 Do each low office of your holy house;  
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute dole  
 To poor sick people, richer in His eyes  
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I;  
 And treat their loathsome hurts and heal mine own;  
 And so wear out in alms-deed and in prayer  
 The sombre close of that voluptuous day  
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord the King."

She said. They took her to themselves;  
 and she  
 Still hoping, fearing "Is it yet too late?"  
 Dwelt with them, till in time their ab-  
 bess died.  
 Then she, for her good deeds and her pure  
 life,  
 And for the power of ministration in her,  
 And likewise for the high rank she had  
 borne,  
 Was chosen abbess, there, an abbess,  
 lived  
 For three brief years, and there, an ab-  
 bess, passed  
 To where beyond these voices there is  
 peace. 1859.

## TITHONUS

THE woods decay, the woods decay and  
 fall,  
 The vapors weep their burthen to the  
 ground,  
 Man comes and tills the field and lies be-  
 neath,  
 And after many a summer dies the swan.  
 Me only cruel immortality  
 Consumes; I wither slowly in thine arms,  
 Here at the quiet limit of the world,

A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a  
 dream  
 The ever-silent spaces of the East,  
 Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of  
 morn.  
 Alas! for this gray shadow, once a  
 man—  
 So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,  
 Who madest him thy chosen, that he  
 seem'd  
 To his great heart none other than a  
 God!  
 I ask'd thee, "Give me immortality."  
 Then didst thou grant mine asking with  
 a smile,  
 Like wealthy men who care not how  
 they give.  
 But thy strong Hours indignant work'd  
 their wills,  
 And beat me down and marr'd and  
 wasted me,  
 And tho' they could not end me, left me  
 maim'd  
 To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
 Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
 And all I was in ashes. Can thy love,  
 Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even  
 now,  
 Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,  
 Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill  
 with tears  
 To hear me? Let me go; take back thy  
 gift.  
 Why should a man desire in any way  
 To vary from the kindly race of men,  
 Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance  
 Where all should pause, as is most meet  
 for all?  
 A soft air fans the cloud apart; there  
 comes  
 A glimpse of that dark world where I  
 was born.  
 Once more the old mysterious glimmer  
 steals  
 From thy pure brows, and from thy  
 shoulders pure,  
 And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.  
 Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the  
 gloom,  
 Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to  
 mine,  
 Ere yet they blind the stars, and the  
 wild team  
 Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,  
 arise,  
 And shake the darkness from their  
 loosen'd manes,  
 And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.  
 Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful

In silence, then before thine answer  
 Departest, and thy tears are on my  
 cheek.  
 Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy  
 tears,  
 And make me tremble lest a saying  
 learnt,  
 In days far-off, on that dark earth, be  
 true?  
 "The Gods themselves cannot recall  
 their gifts."  
 Ay me! ay me! with what another  
 heart  
 In days far-off, and with what other  
 eyes  
 I used to watch—if I be he that  
 watch'd—  
 The lucid outline forming round thee;  
 saw  
 The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;  
 Changed with thy mystic change, and  
 felt my blood  
 Glow with the glow that slowly crim-  
 son'd all  
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I  
 lay,  
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-  
 warm  
 With kisses balmier than half-opening  
 buds  
 Of April, and could hear the lips that  
 kiss'd  
 Whispering I knew not what of wild  
 and sweet,  
 Like that strange song I heard Apollo  
 sing.  
 While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.  
 Yet hold me not for ever in thine  
 East:  
 How can my nature longer mix with  
 thine?  
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrin-  
 led feet  
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when  
 the steam  
 Floats up from those dim fields about  
 the homes [die,  
 Of happy men that have the power to  
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead.  
 Release me, and restore me to the  
 ground. [grave;  
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my  
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by  
 morn, [courts,  
 I earth in earth forget these empty  
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels.  
*About 1835. 1860.*

## THE SAILOR BOY

He rose at dawn and, fired with hope,  
 Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,  
 And reach'd the ship and caught the  
 rope,  
 And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud  
 He heard a fierce mermaid cry,  
 "O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,  
 I see the place where thou wilt lie."

"The sands and yeasty surges mix  
 In caves about the dreary bay,  
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,  
 And in thy heart the scrawl shall  
 play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure  
 To those that stay and those that roam,  
 But I will nevermore endure  
 To sit with empty hands at home."

"My mother clings about my neck,  
 My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame!'  
 My father raves of death and wreck,—  
 They are all to blame, they are all to  
 blame."

"God help me! save I take my part  
 Of danger on the roaring sea,  
 A devil rises in my heart,  
 Far worse than any death to me."  
 1861.

MILTON

(ALCAICS)

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmo-  
 nies,  
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,  
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
 Milton, a name to resound for ages:  
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,  
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armo-  
 ries,  
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean  
 Rings to the roar of an angel onset!  
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,  
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,  
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
 Where some refulgent sunset of India  
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,  
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-  
 woods  
 Whisper in odorous heights of even  
 1863.

## THE VOYAGE

behind the painted buoy  
 crosses at the harbor-mouth ;  
 dly danced our hearts with joy,  
 it we fled to the south.  
 ish was every sight and sound  
 en main or winding shore !  
 w the merry world was round,  
 ve might sail for evermore.

broke the breeze against the  
 ow,  
 ng the tackle, sang the sail ;  
 r's-head upon the prow  
 it the shrill salt, and sheer'd the  
 ile.  
 ud seas swell'd to meet the keel,  
 wept behind ; so quick the run  
 the good ship shake and reel,  
 em'd to sail into the sun !

we saw the sun retire,  
 urn the threshold of the night,  
 n his Ocean-lane of fire,  
 leep beneath his pillar'd light !  
 the purple-skirted robe  
 ight slowly downward drawn,  
 the slumber of the globe  
 we dash'd into the dawn !

rs all night above the brim  
 ters lighten'd into view ;  
 mb'd as quickly, for the rim  
 ed every moment as we flew.  
 the naked moon across  
 useless ocean's heaving field,  
 g shone, the silver boss  
 own halo's dusky shield.

ky islet shifted shapes,  
 towns on hills were dimly seen ;  
 ed long lines of Northern capes  
 ewy Northern meadows green.  
 e to warmer waves, and deep  
 the boundless east we drove,  
 those long swells of breaker  
 eep  
 utmeg rocks and isles of clove.

s that flamed, or, all in shade,  
 d the low coast and quivering  
 ine  
 hy rains, that spreading made  
 stic plume or sable pine ;  
 s and steaming flats, and floods  
 ghty mouth, we scudded fast,  
 s and scarlet-mingled woods  
 d for a moment as we passed.

O hundred shores of happy climes,  
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !  
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;  
 At times a carven craft would shoot  
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,  
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,  
 But we nor paused for fruit nor  
 flowers.

For one fair Vision ever fled  
 Down the waste waters day and night,  
 And still we follow'd where she led,  
 In hope to gain upon her flight.  
 Her face was evermore unseen,  
 And fixed upon the far sea-line ;  
 But each man murmur'd, " O my queen,  
 I follow till I make thee mine ! "

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd  
 Like Fancy made of golden air.  
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd  
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,  
 Now high on waves that idly burst  
 Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the  
 sea,  
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
 She bore the blade of Liberty.

And only one among us—him  
 We pleased not—he was seldom  
 pleased ;  
 He saw not far, his eyes were dim,  
 But ours he swore were all diseased.  
 " A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,  
 " A ship of fools," he sneer'd and  
 wept,  
 And overboard one stormy night  
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,  
 Nor anchor dropped at eve or morn ;  
 We loved the glories of the world.  
 But laws of nature were our scorn.  
 For blasts would rise and rave and cease,  
 But whence were those that drove the  
 sail  
 Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,  
 And to and thro' the counter gale ?

Again to colder climes we came,  
 For still we follow'd where she led ;  
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,  
 And half the crew are sick or dead,  
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,  
 We follow that which flies before ;  
 We know the merry world is round,  
 And we may sail for evermore.

1864.

## NORTHERN FARMER

## OLD STYLE

WHEER 'asta bean saw long and mea  
liggin' 'ere aloan?  
Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse; whoy,  
Doctor 's abean an' agoan;  
Says that I moant 'a naw moor aale, but  
I beant a fool;  
Git ma my aale, fur I beant a-gawin'  
to break my rule.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says  
what 's nawways true;  
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saay the  
things that a do.  
I 've 'ed my point o' aale ivry noight  
sin' I bean 'ere.  
An' I 've 'ed my quart ivry market-  
noight for foorty year.

Parson 's a bean loikewise, an' a sittin'  
ere o' my bed.  
"The Amoighty 's a taakin o' you<sup>1</sup> to  
'lessén, my friend," a said,  
An' a tow'd ma my sins, an' 's toithe  
were due, an' I gied it in hond;  
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done  
boy the lond.

Larn'd a ma' bea. I reckons I 'annot  
sa mooch to larn.  
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'bout Bessy  
Marris's barne.  
Thaw a knaws I hallus voated wi'  
Squire an' choorch an' staate,  
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver  
agin the raate.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afor  
moy Sally wur dead,  
An' 'eard 'um a bummin' awaay loike a  
buzzard-clock<sup>2</sup> ower my 'ead,  
An' I niver knaw'd whot a mean'd but  
I thowt a 'ad summut to saay,  
An' I thowt a said whot a ow't to 'a said,  
an' I coom'd awaay.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she  
laaid it to mea.  
Mowt a bean, mayhap, for she wur a  
bad un, shea.  
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass,  
tha mun understand;  
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done  
boy the lond.

<sup>1</sup> ou as in *hour*. [The notes on this poem are  
Fennyson's.]  
<sup>2</sup> Cockchafer.

But Parson a cooms an' a goas, an' a  
says it easy an' freea:  
"The Amoighty 's a taakin o' you to  
'lessén, my friend," says 'ea.  
I weant saay men be loiars, thaw sum-  
mun said it in 'aaste;  
But 'e reads wonn sarmin a wecak, an' I  
'a stubb'd Thurnaby waaste.

D' ya moind the waaste, my lass? naw,  
naw, tha was not born then;  
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eard  
'um mysén;  
Moast loike a butter-bump,<sup>1</sup> fur I 'eard  
'um about an' about,  
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an'  
raaved an' rembled 'um out.

Keaper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer  
a-laaid of 'is faace  
Down i' the woild 'enemies<sup>2</sup> afor I  
coom'd to the plaace.  
Noaks or Thimbleby—toaner<sup>3</sup> 'ed shot  
'um as dead as a naail.  
Noaks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soime—  
but git ma my aale.

Dubbut looók at the waaste; theer  
warn't not feead for a cow;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuxx, an'  
look at it now—  
Warn't worth nowt a haacre, an' now  
theer 's lots o' feead,  
Fourscoor yows<sup>4</sup> upon it, an' some on it  
down i' seed.<sup>5</sup>

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I mean'd to  
'a stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I mean'd, an' runn'd plow  
thruff it an' all,  
If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let  
ma aloan,—  
Mea, wi' haate hoonderd haacre o'  
Squire's, an lond o' my oan.

Do Godamoighty knaw what a's doing  
a-taakin' o' mea?  
I beant wonn as saws 'ere a bean an yon-  
der a pea;  
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a'  
dear, a' dear!  
And I 'a managed for Squire coom  
Michaelmas thutty year.

A mowt 'a taasn owd Joanes, as 'ant not  
a 'apoth o' sense,  
Or a mowt a' taasn young Robins—a  
niver mended a fence;

<sup>1</sup> Bittern. <sup>2</sup> Anemones. <sup>3</sup> One or other.  
<sup>4</sup> ou as in *hour*. <sup>5</sup> Clover.

But Godamoighty a moost taake mea an'  
taake ma now,  
Wi' aaf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby  
hoalms to plow !

Loočk 'ow quoloty smoiles when they  
seas ma a passin' boy,  
Says to thessen, naw doubt, "What a  
man a bea sewer-loy !"  
Fur they knows what I bean to Squoire  
sin' fust a coom'd to the 'All ;  
I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done  
moy duty boy hall.

Squoire 's i' Lunnon, an' summun I  
reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,  
For whoa 's to howd the lond ater mea  
thot muddles ma quoit ;  
Sartin-sewer I bea thot a weant niver  
give it to Joanes,  
Naw, nor a moant to Robins—a niver  
rembles the stoans.

But summun 'ull come ater mea mayhap  
wi' 'is kittle o' steam  
Huzzin' an' maazin' the blessed fealds  
wi' the devil's oan team.  
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife  
they says is sweet,  
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I  
couldn a bear to see it.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn  
bring ma the aale ?  
Doctor 's a 'toattler, lass, an a's hallus i'  
the owd taale ;  
I weant break rules fur Doctor, a knows  
naw moor nor a floy ;  
Git ma my aale, I tell tha, an' if I mun  
doy I mun doy. 1864.

#### THE FLOWER <sup>1</sup>

ONCE in a golden hour  
I cast to earth a seed.  
Up there came a flower,  
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went  
Thro' my garden-bower,  
And muttering discontent  
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall  
It wore a crown of light,  
But thieves from o'er the wall  
Stole the seed by night ;

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson II, 10-11.

Sow'd it far and wide  
By every town and tower,  
Till all the people cried  
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable :  
He that runs may read.  
Most can raise the flowers now  
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,  
And some are poor indeed ;  
And now again the people  
Call it but a weed. 1864.

#### IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest  
white,  
Deepening thy voice with the deepening  
of the night,  
All along the valley, where thy waters  
flow,  
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty  
years ago.  
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-  
day,  
The two and thirty years were a mist  
that rolls away ;  
For all along the valley, down thy rocky  
bed,  
Thy living voice to me was as the voice  
of the dead,  
And all along the valley, by rock and  
cave and tree,  
The voice of the dead was a living voice  
to me. 1861. 1864.

#### A DEDICATION

DEAR, near and true,—no truer Time  
himself  
Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-  
more  
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life  
Shoots to the fall,—take this and pray  
that he  
Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith  
in him,  
May trust himself ; and after praise and  
scorn, [world.  
As one who feels the immeasurable  
Attain the wise indifference of the wise ;  
And after autumn past—if left to pass  
His autumn into seeming-leafless days—  
Draw toward the long frost and longest  
night, [fruit  
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the  
Which in our winter woodland looks a  
flower. 1864.



## WAGES

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory  
of song.

Paid with a voice flying by to be lost  
on an endless sea—

Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to  
right the wrong—

Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no  
lover of glory she ;  
Give her the glory of going on, and still  
to be.

The wages of sin is death : if the wages  
of Virtue be dust,

Would she have heart to endure for  
the life of the worm and the fly ?  
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet  
seats of the just,

To rest in a golden grove, or to bask  
in a summer sky ;  
Give her the wages of going on, and not  
to die. 1868.

## FROM THE COMING OF ARTHUR

## MERLIN'S RIDDLE

RAIN, rain, and sun ! a rainbow in the  
sky !

A young man will be wiser by and by ;  
An old man's wit may wander ere he die.

Rain, rain, and sun ! a rainbow on the  
lea !

And truth is this to me, and that to thee ;  
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain ! and the free blos-  
som blows ;

Sun, rain, and sun ! and where is he who  
knows ?

From the great deep to the great deep  
he goes. 1869.

## TRUMPET SONG

Blow trumpet, for the world is white  
with May !

Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd  
away !

Blow thro' the living world—" Let the  
King reign ! "

Shall Rome or Heathen rule in Arthur's  
realm ?

Flash brand and lance, fall battle-axe  
upon helm,

Fall battle-axe, and flash brand ! Let  
the King reign !

Strike for the King and live ! his knights  
have heard

That God hath told the King a secret  
word.

Fall battle-axe, and flash brand ! Let  
the King reign !

Blow trumpet ! he will lift us from the  
dust.

Blow trumpet ! live the strength, and  
die the lust !

Clang battle-axe, and clash brand ! Let  
the King reign !

Strike for the King and die ! and if thou  
diest,

The King is king, and ever wills the  
highest.

Clang battle-axe, and clash brand ! Let  
the King reign !

Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his May !  
Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by  
day !

Clang battle-axe, and clash brand ! Let  
the King reign !

The King will follow Christ, and we the  
King,

In whom high God hath breathed a  
secret thing.

Fall battle-axe, and flash brand ! Let  
the King reign ! 1874.

## THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas,  
the hills and the plains,—

Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him  
who reigns ?

Is not the Vision He, tho' He be not that  
which He seems ?

Dreams are true while they last, and do  
we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of  
body and limb,

Are they not sign and symbol of thy  
division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee ; thyself art  
the reason why,

For is He not all but thou, that hast  
power to feel " I am I " ?

Glory about thee, without thee : and  
thou fulfillest thy doom,

Making Him broken gleams and a stifled  
splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and  
Spirit with Spirit can meet—  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer  
than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O soul, and  
let us rejoice,  
For if He thunder by law the thunder is  
yet His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all,  
says the fool,  
For all we have power to see is a straight  
staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the  
eye of man cannot see;  
But if we could see and hear, this  
Vision—were it not He? 1860.

#### FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

FLOWER in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my  
hand,

Little flower—but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in  
all,

I should know what God and man is.  
1869.

#### NORTHERN FARMER

##### NEW STYLE

DON'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they  
canters awaay?

Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's  
what I 'ears 'em saay.

Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam,  
thou's an ass for thy pains;  
Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs, nor  
in all thy brains.

Woa—theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha,  
Sam: yon 's parson's 'ouse—

Don't thou know that a man mun be  
eather a man or a mouse?

Time to think on it then; for thou'll be  
twenty to week.<sup>1</sup>

Proputty, proputty—woa then, woa—let  
ma 'ear mysen speak.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as bean  
a-talkin' o' thee;

Thou's bean talkin' to muther, an' she  
bean a-tellin' it me.

Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's  
sweet upo' parson's lass—

<sup>1</sup> This week.

Noa—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we  
boath on us thinks tha an ass.

Seea'd her to-daay goa by—Saaaint's-daay  
—they was ringing the bells.

She's a beauty, thou thinks—an' soa is  
scoors o' gells,

Them as 'as munny an' all—wot's a  
beauty?—the flower as blows.

But proputty, proputty sticks, an' pro-  
putty, proputty grows.

Do'ant be stunt; <sup>1</sup> taake time. I knaws  
what maakes tha sa mad.

Warn't I craazed fur the lasses mysén  
when I wur a lad?

But I know'd a Quaaker feller as often  
'as tow'd ma this:

“Doant thou marry for munny, but goa  
wheer munny is!”

An' I went wheer munny war; an' thy  
muther coom to 'and,

Wi' lots o' munny laald by, an' a nicetish  
bit o' land.

Maaybe she warn't a beauty—I niver giv  
it a thowt—

But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss  
as a lass as 'ant nowt?

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weant 'a  
nowt when 'e 's dead,

Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and  
addle <sup>2</sup> her bread.

Why? fur 'e 's nobbut a curate, an'  
weant niver get hissen clear,

An' 'e maade the bed as 'e ligs on afoor  
'e coom'd to the shere.

An' thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots  
o' Varsity debt,

Stook to his taall they did, an' 'e 'ant  
got shut on 'em yet.

An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi'  
noan to lend 'im a shove,

Woorse nor a far-welter'd <sup>3</sup> yowe; fur,  
Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy  
lass an' 'er munny too,

Maakin' 'em goa together, as they've good  
right to do.

Couldn I luvv thy muther by cause 'o  
'er munny laald by?

Naay—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor  
fur it; reason why.

<sup>1</sup> Obstinate.

<sup>2</sup> Earn.

<sup>3</sup> Or, fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on its  
back in the furrow.

Ay, an' thy muther says thou wants to  
marry the lass,  
Cooms of a gentleman burn; an' we  
boath on us thinks tha an ass.  
Woa then, proputtty, wiltha?—an ass as  
near as mays nowt!<sup>1</sup>  
Woa then, wiltha? dangtha!—the bees  
is as fell as owt.<sup>2</sup>

Break me a bit o' the esh for his 'ead,  
lad, out o' the fence!  
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman  
burn? is it shillins an' pence?  
Proputtty, proputtty's ivrything 'ere, an',  
Sammy, I'm blest  
If it is n't the saame oop yonder, fur  
them as 'as it 's the best.

Tis 'n them as 'as munny as breaks into  
'ouses an' steals,  
Them as 'as coats to their backs an'  
taakes their regular meals.  
Noa, but it 's them as niver knaws wheer  
a meal's to be 'ad.  
Taake my word for it Sammy, the poor  
in a loomp is bad.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a  
bean a laazy lot,  
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whin-  
iver munny was got.  
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leastways 'is  
munny was 'id.  
But 'e tued an' moll'd issén dead, an' 'e  
died a good un, 'e did.

Looók thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck  
cooms out by the 'ill!  
Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I runs  
oop to the mill;  
An' I 'll run oop to the brig, an' that  
thou 'll live to see;  
And if thou marries a good un I 'll leave  
the land to thee.

Thim's my noations, Sammy, wheerby  
I means to stick;  
But if thou marries a bad un, I 'll leave  
the land to Dick.—  
Coom oop, proputtty, proputtty—that's  
what I 'ears 'im saay—  
Proputtty, proputtty, proputtty—canter  
an' canter awaay. 1870.

#### ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782

O THOU that sendest out the man  
To rule by land and sea,

<sup>1</sup> Makes nothing.

<sup>2</sup> The flies are as fierce as anything.

Strong mother of a lion-line.  
Be proud of those strong sons of thine  
Who wrench'd their rights from thee!

What wonder if in noble heat  
Those men thine arms withstood.  
Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,  
And in thy spirit with thee fought—  
Who sprang from English blood!

But thou rejoice with liberal joy,  
Lift up thy rocky face,  
And shatter, when the storms are black.  
In many a streaming torrent back,  
The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law  
The growing world assume,  
Thy work is thine—the single note  
From that deep chord which Hampden  
smote  
Will vibrate to the doom. 1872.

#### THE VOICE AND THE PEAK

THE voice and the Peak,  
Far over summit and lawn,  
The lone glow and long roar  
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
of dawn!

All night have I heard the voice  
Rave over the rocky bar,  
But thou wert silent in heaven,  
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak.  
That standest high above all?  
"I am the voice of the Peak,  
I roar and rave, for I fall.

"A thousand voices go  
To North, South, East, and West:  
They leave the heights and are troubled,  
And moun and sink to their rest.

"The fields are fair beside them,  
The chestnut towers in his bloom;  
But they—they feel the desire of the  
deep—  
Fall, and follow their doom.

"The deep has power on the height,  
And the height has power on the deep;  
They are raised for ever and ever,  
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,  
But when their cycle is o'er,

The valley, the voice, the peak, the star  
Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd  
At his highest with sunrise fire ;  
The Peak is high, and the stars are high,  
And the thought of a man is higher.

A deep below the deep,  
And a height beyond the height !  
Our hearing is not hearing,  
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak  
Far into heaven withdrawn,  
The lone glow and long roar  
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
of dawn ! 1874.

#### LYRICS FROM QUEEN MARY

##### MILKMAID'S SONG

SHAME upon you, Robin,  
Shame upon you now !  
Kiss me would you ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?  
Daisies grow again,  
Kingcups blow again,  
And you came and kiss'd me milking  
the cow.

Robin came behind me,  
Kiss'd me well, I vow.  
Cuff him could I ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?  
Swallows fly again,  
Cuckoos cry again,  
And you came and kiss'd me milking  
the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,  
Come and kiss me now ;  
Help it can I ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?  
Ringdoves coo again,  
All things woo again.  
Come behind and kiss me milking  
the cow !

LOW, LUTE, LOW !

HAPLESS doom of woman happy in be-  
trothing !  
Beauty passes like a breath, and love is  
lost in loathing.  
Low, my lute : speak low, my lute, but  
say the world is nothing—  
Low, lute, low !

Love will hover round the flowers when  
they first awaken ;  
Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be  
overtaken.  
Low, my lute ! O, low, my lute ! we fade  
and are forsaken—  
Low, dear lute, low !

1875.

#### MONTENEGRO

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle  
sails,  
They kept their faith, their freedom, on  
the height,  
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day  
and night  
Against the Turk ; whose inroad no-  
where scales  
Their headlong passes, but his footstep  
fails,  
And red with blood the Crescent reels  
from fight  
Before their dauntless hundreds, in  
prone flight  
By thousands down the crags and thro'  
the vales.  
O smallest among peoples ! rough rock-  
throne  
Of Freedom ! warriors beating back the  
swarm  
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,  
Great Tsernogora ! never since thine own  
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake  
the storm  
Has breathed a race of mightier moun-  
taineers. 1877.

#### THE REVENGE<sup>1</sup>

##### A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

###### I

AT Flores in the Azores Sir Richard  
Grenville lay,  
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird,  
came flying from far away ;  
"Spanish ships of war at sea ! we have  
sighted fifty-three !"  
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard :  
"Fore God I am no coward ;  
But I cannot meet them here, for my  
ships are out of gear,  
And the half my men are sick. I must  
fly, but follow quick.  
We are six ships of the line ; can we  
fight with fifty-three ?"

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson, II. 351-2.

## II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I  
know you are no coward ;  
You fly them for a moment to fight with  
them again.  
But I 've ninety men and more that are  
lying sick ashore.  
I should count myself the coward if I  
left them, my Lord Howard,  
To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-  
doms of Spain."

## III

So Lord Howard past away with five  
ships of war that day,  
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent  
summer heaven ;  
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick  
men from the land  
Very carefully and slow,  
Men of Bideford in Devon,  
And we laid them on the ballast down  
below :  
For we brought them all aboard,  
And they blest him in their pain, that  
they were not left to Spain,  
To the thumb-screw and the stake, for  
the glory of the Lord.

## IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work  
the ship and to fight  
And he sailed away from Flores till the  
Spaniard came in sight,  
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon  
the weather bow.  
" Shall we fight or shall we fly ?  
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,  
For to fight is but to die !  
There 'll be little of us left by the time  
this sun be set."  
And Sir Richard said again : " We be all  
good English men.  
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the  
children of the devil.  
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or  
devil yet."

## V

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and  
we roar'd a hurrah, and so  
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the  
heart of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck, and  
her ninety sick below ;

For half of their fleet to the right and  
half to the left were seen,  
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the  
long sea-lane between.

## VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down  
from their decks and laugh'd,  
Thousands of their seamen made mock  
at the mad little craft  
Running on and on, till delay'd  
By their mountain-like San Philip that  
of fifteen hundred tons,  
And up-shadowing high above us with  
her yawning tiers of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and we  
stay'd.

## VII

And while now the great San Philip  
hung above us like a cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud,  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day.  
And two upon the larboard and two  
upon the starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from them  
all.

## VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she be-  
thought herself and went,  
Having that within her womb that had  
left her ill content ;  
And the rest they came aboard us, and  
they fought us hand to hand,  
For a dozen times they came with their  
pikes and musqueteers,  
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a  
dog that shakes his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the  
land.

## IX

And the sun went down, and the stars  
came out far over the summer  
sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight of  
the one and the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
their high-built galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
with her battle-thunder and flame:  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
drew back with her dead and her  
shame.  
For some were sunk and many were  
shatter'd, and so could fight us no  
more—

God of battles, was ever a battle like  
this in the world before?

X

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;  
And it chanced that, when half of the  
short summer night was gone,  
With a grisly wound to be drest he had  
left the deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was dress-  
ing it suddenly dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in  
the side and the head,  
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

XI

And the night went down, and the sun  
smiled out far over the summer  
sea.  
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides  
lay round us all in a ring;  
But they dared not touch us again, for  
they fear'd that we still could  
sting.  
So they watch'd what the end would be.  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were  
slain,  
And half of the rest of us maim'd for  
life  
In the crash of the cannonades and the  
desperate strife;  
And the sick men down in the hold were  
most of them stark and cold.  
And the pikes were all broken or bent,  
and the powder was all of it spent;  
And the masts and the rigging were  
lying over the side;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English  
pride:  
"We have fought such a fight for a day  
and a night  
As may never be fought again!  
We have won great glory, my men!  
And a day less or more  
At sea or ashore,  
We die—does it matter when?  
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink  
her, split her in twain!  
Fall into the hands of God, not into the  
hands of Spain!"

XII

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the  
seamen made reply:

"We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives.  
We will make the Spaniard promise, if  
we yield, to let us go;  
We shall live to fight again and to strike  
another blow."  
And the lion there lay dying, and they  
yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their  
flagship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old  
Sir Richard caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with  
their courtly foreign grace;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he  
cried:  
"I have fought for Queen and Faith  
like a valiant man and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is  
bound to do.  
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-  
ville die!"  
And he fell upon their decks, and he  
died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had  
been so valiant and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of  
Spain so cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship  
and his English few;  
Was he devil or man? He was devil for  
aught they knew,  
But they sank his body with honor down  
into the deep.  
And they mann'd the Revenge with a  
swarthier alien crew,  
And away she sail'd with her loss and  
long'd for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had  
ruin'd awoke from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the  
weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great  
gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised  
by an earthquake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails  
and their masts and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on  
the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,  
And the little Revenge herself went  
down by the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW<sup>1</sup>

## I

BANNER of England, not for a season, O  
 banner of Britain, hast thou  
 Floated in conquering battle or flapped  
 to the battle-cry!  
 Never with mightier glory than when  
 we had rear'd thee on high  
 Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly  
 siege of Lucknow—  
 Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but  
 ever we raised thee anew,  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew.

## II

Frail were the works that defended the  
 hold that we held with our lives—  
 Women and children among us, God  
 help them, our children and wives!  
 Hold it we might—and for fifteen days  
 or for twenty at most.  
 "Never surrender, I charge you, but  
 every man die at his post!"  
 Voice of the dead whom we loved, our  
 Lawrence, the best of the brave;  
 Cold were his brows when we kiss'd  
 him—we laid him that night in  
 his grave.  
 "Every man die at his post!" and there  
 hail'd on our houses and halls  
 Death from their rifle bullets, and death  
 from their cannon-balls.  
 Death in our innermost chamber, and  
 death at our slight barricade.  
 Death while we stood with the musket,  
 and death while we stooped to the  
 spade,  
 Death to the dying, and wounds to the  
 wounded, for often there fell,  
 Striking the hospital wall, crashing  
 thro' it, their shot and their shell,  
 Death—for their spies were among us,  
 their marksmen were told of our  
 best,  
 So that the brute bullet broke thro' the  
 brain that could think for the  
 rest;  
 Bullets would sing by our foreheads,  
 and bullets would rain at our  
 feet—

<sup>1</sup> "The old flag used during the defence of the Residency, was hoisted on the Lucknow flagstaff by General Wilson, and the soldiers who still survived from the siege were all mustered on parade in honor of this poem, when my son Lionel (who died on his journey from India) visited Lucknow. A tribute overwhelmingly touching." (*Tennyson*.)

Fire from ten thousand at once of the  
 rebels that girdled us round—  
 Death at the glimpse of a finger from  
 over the breadth of a street,  
 Death from the heights of the mosque  
 and the palace, and death in the  
 ground!  
 Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine!  
 down, down! and creep thro' the  
 hole!  
 Keep the revolver in hand! you can  
 hear him—the murderous mole!  
 Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of  
 the pickaxe be thro'!  
 Click with the pick, coming nearer and  
 nearer again than before—  
 Now let it speak, and you fire, and the  
 dark pioneer is no more;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew!

## III

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many  
 times, and it chanced on a day  
 Soon as the blast of that underground  
 thunder-clap echo'd away  
 Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur  
 like so many fiends in their hell—  
 Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on  
 volley, and yell upon yell—  
 Fiercely on all the defences our myriad  
 enemy fell.  
 What have they done? where is it?  
 Out yonder. Guard the Redan!  
 Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the  
 Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran  
 Surging and swaying all round us, as  
 ocean on every side  
 Plunges and heaves at a bank that is  
 daily drowned by the tide—  
 So many thousands that, if they be bold  
 enough, who shall escape?  
 Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall  
 know we are soldiers and men!  
 Ready! take aim at their leaders—their  
 masses are gapp'd with our grape—  
 Backward they reel like the wave, like  
 the wave fingering forward again,  
 Flying and foil'd at the last by the  
 handful they could not subdue:  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew!

## IV

Handful of men as we were, we were  
 English in heart and in limb,  
 Strong with the strength of the race to  
 command, to obey, to endure,

Each of us fought as if hope for the gar-  
rison hung but on him;  
Still—could we watch at all points? we  
were every day fewer and fewer.  
There was a whisper among us, but only  
a whisper that past:  
“Children and wives—if the tigers leap  
into the fold unawares—  
Every man die at his post—and the foe  
may outlive us at last—  
Better to fall by the hands that they  
love, than to fall into theirs!”  
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines  
by the enemy sprung  
Clove into perilous chasms our walls and  
our poor palisades.  
Riflemen, true is your heart, but be sure  
that your hand be as true!  
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed  
are your flank fusillades—  
Twice do we hurl them to earth from  
the ladders to which they had  
clung,  
Twice from the ditch where they shelter  
we drive them with hand-gre-  
nades;  
And ever upon the topmost roof our  
banner of England blew!

## V

Then on another wild morning another  
wild earthquake out-tore  
Clean from our lines of defence ten or  
twelve good paces or more.  
Riflemen, high on the roof, hidden there  
from the light of the sun  
One has leaped up on the breach, crying  
out: “Follow me, follow me!”—  
Mark him—he falls! then another and  
him too, and down goes he.  
Had they been bold enough then, who  
can tell but the traitors had won?  
Boardings and rafters and doors—an  
embrasure! make way for the gun!  
Now double-charge it with grape! It is  
charged and we fire, and they run.  
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let  
the dark face have his due!  
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who  
fought with us, faithful and few,  
Fought with the bravest among us, and  
drove them, and smote them, and  
slew,  
That ever upon the topmost roof our  
banner in India blew.

## VI

Men will forget what we suffer and not  
what we do. We can fight!

But to be soldier all day, and be sentinel  
all thro’ the night—  
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,  
their lying alarms,  
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and  
shoutings and soundings to arms,  
Ever the labor of fifty that had to be  
done by five,  
Ever the marvel among us that one  
should be left alive,  
Ever the day with its traitorous death  
from the loopholes around,  
Ever the night with its coffinless corpse  
to be laid in the ground,  
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge  
of cataract skies,  
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite  
torment of flies,  
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing  
over an English field,  
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound  
that *would* not be heal’d.  
Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-  
pitiless knife,—  
Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never  
could save us a life,  
Valor of delicate women who tended  
the hospital bed,  
Horror of women in travail among the  
dying and dead,  
Grief for our perishing children, and  
never a moment for grief,  
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering  
hopes of relief,  
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher’d  
for all that we knew—  
Then day and night, day and night, com-  
ing down on the still-shatter’d  
walls  
Millions of musket-bullets, and thou-  
sands of cannon-balls—  
But ever upon the topmost roof our  
banner of England blew.

## VII

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true  
what was told by the scout,  
Outram and Havelock breaking their  
way through the fell mutineers?  
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing  
again in our ears?  
All on a sudden the garrison utter a  
jubilant shout,  
Havelock’s glorious Highlanders answer  
with conquering cheers,  
Sick from the hospital echo them, women  
and children come out,  
Blessing the wholesome white faces of  
Havelock’s good fusileers,



Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the  
 Highlander wet with their tears!  
 Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are  
 saved!—is it you? is it you?  
 Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved  
 by the blessing of heaven!  
 "Hold it for fifteen days!" we have  
 held it for eighty-seven!  
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old  
 banner of England blew. 1879.

RIZPAH<sup>1</sup>

17—

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind  
 over land and sea—  
 And Willy's voice in the wind, "O  
 mother, come out to me!"  
 Why should he call me to-night, when  
 he knows that I cannot go?  
 For the downs are as bright as day, and  
 the full moon stares at the snow.  
 We should be seen, my dear; they would  
 spy us out of the town.  
 The loud black nights for us, and the  
 storm rushing over the down,  
 When I cannot see my own hand, but  
 am led by the creak of the chain,  
 And grovel and grope for my son till I  
 find myself drenched with the  
 rain.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was  
 there left to fall?

I have taken them home, I have num-  
 ber'd the bones, I have hidden  
 them all.

What am I saying? and what are *you*?  
 do you come as a spy!

Falls? what falls? who knows? As the  
 tree falls so must it lie.

Who let her in? how long has she been?  
 you—what have you heard?

Why did you sit so quiet? you never  
 have spoken a word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none  
 of their spies—

But the night has crept into my heart,  
 and begun to darken my eyes.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what  
 should *you* know of the night.

The blast and the burning shame and  
 the bitter frost and the fright?

I have done it, while you were asleep—  
 you were only made for the day.

I have gather'd my baby together—and  
 now you may go your way.

Nay—for it's kind of you, madam, to sit  
 by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have  
 only an hour of life.

I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he  
 went out to die.

"They dared me to do it," he said, and  
 he never has told me a lie.

I whipped him for robbing an orchard  
 once when he was but a child—

"The farmer dared me to do it," he said;  
 he was always so wild—

And idle—and could n't be idle—my  
 Willy—he never could rest.

The King should have made him a sol-  
 dier, he would have been one of  
 his best.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates,  
 and they never would let him be  
 good;

They swore that he dare not rob the  
 mail, and he swore that he would;  
 And he took no life, but he took one  
 purse, and when all was done

He flung it among his fellows—"I'll  
 none of it," said my son.

I came into court to the judge and the  
 lawyers. I told them my tale.

God's own truth—but they kill'd him,  
 they kill'd him for robbing the  
 mail.

They hang'd him in chains for a show—  
 we had always borne a good  
 name—

To be hang'd for a thief—and then put  
 away—is n't that enough shame?

Dust to dust—low down—let us hide!  
 but they set him so high

That all the ships of the world could  
 stare at him, passing by.

God 'll pardon the hell-black raven and  
 horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer  
 who kill'd him and hang'd him  
 there.

And the jailer forced me away. I had  
 bid him my last good-bye;

They had fasten'd the door of his cell.  
 "O mother!" I heard him cry.

I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had  
 something further to say.

And now I never shall know it. The  
 jailer forced me away.

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson II. 249-251.

Then since I could n't but hear that cry  
of my boy that was dead,  
They seized me and shut me up: they  
fasten'd me down on my bed.  
"Mother, O mother!"—he call'd in the  
dark to me year after year—  
They beat me for that, they beat me—  
you know that I could n't but  
hear;  
And then at the last they found I had  
grown so stupid and still  
They let me abroad again—but the crea-  
tures had worked their will.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of  
my bone was left—  
I stole them all from the lawyers—and  
you, will you call it a theft?—  
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me,  
the bones that had laughed and  
had cried—  
Theirs? O, no! they are mine—not  
theirs—they had moved in my  
side.

Do you think I was scared by the bones?  
I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all—  
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night  
by the churchyard wall.  
My Willy 'll rise up whole when the  
trumpet of judgment 'll sound,  
But I charge you never to say that I  
laid him in holy ground.

They would scratch him up—they would  
hang him again on the cursed tree.  
Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know—let  
all that be,  
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's  
goodwill toward men—  
"Full of compassion and mercy, the  
Lord"—let me hear it again;  
"Full of compassion and mercy—long-  
suffering." Yes, O, yes!  
For the lawyer is born but to murder—  
the Saviour lives but to bless.  
He 'll never put on the black cap except  
for the worst of the worst,  
And the first may be last—I have heard  
it in church—and the last may be  
first.  
Suffering—O, long-suffering—yes, as the  
Lord must know,  
Year after year in the mist and the wind  
and the shower and the snow.

Heard, have you? what? they have told  
you he never repented his sin.  
How do they know it? are *they* his  
mother? are *you* of his kin?

Heard! have you ever heard, when the  
storm on the downs began,  
The wind that 'll wail like a child and  
the sea that 'll moan like a man?

Election, Election, and Reprobation—  
it's all very well.  
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall  
not find him in hell.  
For I cared so much for my boy that the  
Lord has look'd into my care,  
And He means me I 'm sure to be happy  
with Willy, I know not where.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul,  
that is all your desire—  
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if  
my boy be gone to the fire?  
I have been with God in the dark—go,  
go, you may leave me alone—  
You never have borne a child—you are  
just as hard as a stone.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think  
that you mean to be kind,  
But I cannot hear what you say for my  
Willy's voice in the wind—  
The snow and the sky so bright—he  
used but to call in the dark,  
And he calls to me now from the  
church and not from the gibbet—  
for hark!  
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is  
coming—shaking the walls—  
Willy—the moon 's in a cloud—Good-  
night. I am going. He calls.  
1880.

#### SONG FROM THE SISTERS

O DIVINER air,  
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the  
glare,  
Far from out the west in shadowing  
showers,  
Over all the meadow baked and bare,  
Making fresh and fair  
All the bowers and the flowers,  
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,  
Over all this weary world of ours,  
Breathe, diviner Air!

O diviner light,  
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with  
night,  
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding  
showers,  
Far from out a sky for ever bright,  
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,

Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,  
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,  
Break, diviner light ! 1880.

### TO VIRGIL<sup>1</sup>

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest Ilion's  
lofty temples robed in fire,  
Ilion falling, Rome arising, wars, and  
filial faith, and Dido's pyre ;

Landscape-lover, lord of language more  
than he that sang the " Works and  
Days,"  
All the chosen coin of fancy flashing out  
from many a golden phrase ;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,  
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse  
and herd ;  
All the charm of all the Muses  
often flowering in a lonely word ;

Poet of the happy Tityrus piping under-  
neath his beechen bowers ;  
Poet of the poet-satyr whom the laugh-  
ing shepherd bound with flowers ;

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the  
blissful years again to be,  
Summers of the snakeless meadow, un-  
laborious earth and oarless sea ;

Thou that seest Universal Nature moved  
by Universal Mind ;  
Thou majestic in thy sadness at the  
doubtful doom of human kind ;

Light among the vanish'd ages : star  
that gildest yet this phantom  
shore ;  
Golden branch amid the shadows, kings  
and realms that pass to rise no  
more ;

Now thy Forum roars no longer, fallen  
every purple Caesar's dome—  
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound  
forever of Imperial Rome—

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,  
and the Rome of freemen holds her  
place.

I, from out the Northern Island sunder'd  
once from all the human race,

<sup>1</sup> "To Virgil was written at the request of the Mantuan for the nineteenth century of Virgil's Death." (Life of Tennyson, II, 320.)

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved  
thee since my day began,  
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever  
moulded by the lips of man. 1882.

### "FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE"

Row us out from Desenzano, to your  
Sirmione row !  
So they row'd, and there we landed—"O  
venusta Sirmio !"  
There to me thro' all the groves of olive  
in the summer glow,  
There beneath the Roman ruin where the  
purple flowers grow,  
Came that "Ave atque Vale" of the  
Poet's hopeless woe,  
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen  
hundred years ago  
"Frater Ave atque Vale" — as we  
wander'd to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the  
Garda Lake below  
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-  
silvery Sirmio ! 1883.

### EPILOGUE TO THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE

And here the Singer for his art  
Not all in vain may plead  
"The song that nerves a nation's heart  
Is in itself a deed." 1885.

### VASTNESS

MANY a hearth upon our dark globe sighs  
after many a vanish'd face,  
Many a planet by many a sun may roll  
with the dust of a vanish'd race.

Raving politics, never at rest—as this  
poor earth's pale history runs,—  
What is it all but a trouble of ants in the  
gleam of a million million of suns ?

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side,  
truthless violence mourn'd by the  
wise,

Thousands of voices drowning his own  
in a popular torrent of lies upon  
lies ;

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious  
annals of army and fleet,  
Death for the right cause, death for the  
wrong cause, trumpets of victory,  
groans of defeat ;

Innocence seethed in her mother's milk,  
and Charity setting the martyr  
afame ;  
Thralldom who walks with the banner of  
Freedom, and recks not to ruin a  
realm in her name.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the  
gloom of doubts that darken the  
schools ;

Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her  
hand, follow'd up by her vassal  
legion of fools ;

Trade flying over a thousand seas with  
her spice and her vintage, her silk  
and her corn ;

Desolate offing, sailorless harbors, fam-  
ishing populace, wharves forlorn ;

Star of the morning, Hope in the sun-  
rise ; gloom of the evening, Life  
at a close ;

Pleasure who flaunts on her wide down-  
way with her flying robe and her  
poison'd rose ;

Pain that has crawl'd from the corpse of  
Pleasure, a worm which writhes  
all day, and at night

Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper,  
and stings him back to the curse  
of the light ;

Wealth with his wines and his wedded  
harlots ; honest Poverty, bare to  
the bone ;

Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty ; Flat-  
tery gilding the rift in a throne ;

Fame blowing out from her golden trum-  
pet a jubilant challenge to Time  
and to Fate ;

Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle  
on all the laurell'd graves of the  
great ;

Love for the maiden, crown'd with mar-  
riage, no regrets for aught that  
has been,

Household happiness, gracious children,  
debtless competence, golden mean ;

National hatreds of whole generations,  
and pigmy spites of the village  
spire ;

Vows that will last to the last death-  
ruckle, and vows that are snapt in  
a moment of fire ;

He that has lived for the lust of the  
minute, and died in the doing it,  
flesh without mind ;

He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross,  
till Self died out in the love of his  
kind ;

Spring and Summer and Autumn and  
Winter, and all these old revolu-  
tions of earth ;

All new-old revolutions of Empire—  
change of the tide—what is all of  
it worth ?

What the philosophies, all the sciences,  
poesy, varying voices of prayer,  
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all  
that is filthy with all that is fair ?

What is it all, if we all of us end but in  
being our own corpse-coffins at  
last ?

Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence,  
drown'd in the deeps of a meaning-  
less Past ?

What but a murmur of gnats in the  
gloom, or a moment's anger of  
bees in their hive ?—

Peace, let it be ! for I loved him, and  
love him for ever : the dead are  
not dead but alive. 1885.

#### MERLIN AND THE GLEAM<sup>1</sup>

O YOUNG Mariner,  
You from the haven  
Under the sea-cliff,  
You that are watching  
The gray Magician  
With eyes of wonder,  
I am Merlin,  
And I am dying,  
I am Merlin  
Who follow the Gleam.

Mighty the Wizard  
Who found me at sunrise  
Sleeping and woke me  
And learn'd me Magic !  
Great the Master,  
And sweet the Magic,  
When over the valley,  
In early summers,  
Over the mountain,  
On human faces,

<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Tennyson, II, 366.

And all around me,  
Moving to melody,  
Floated the Gleam.

Once at the croak of a Raven who  
crossed it,  
A barbarous people,  
Blind to the magic  
And deaf to the melody,  
Snarl'd at and cursed me.  
A demon vexed me,  
The light retreated,  
The landskip darken'd,  
The melody deaden'd,  
The Master whisper'd,  
"Follow the Gleam."

Then to the melody,  
Over a wilderness  
Gliding, and glancing at  
Elf of the woodland,  
Gnome of the cavern,  
Griffin and Giant,  
And dancing of Fairies  
In desolate hollows,  
And wraiths of the mountain,  
And rolling of dragons  
By warble of water,  
Or cataract music  
Of falling torrents,  
Flitted the Gleam.

Down from the mountain  
And over the level.  
And streaming and shining on  
Silent river,  
Silvery willow,  
Pasture and plowland,  
Innocent maidens,  
Garrulous children,  
Homestead and harvest,  
Reaper and gleaner,  
And rough-ruddy faces  
Of lowly labor,  
Slided the Gleam—

Then, with a melody  
Stronger and statelier,  
Led me at length  
To the city and palace  
Of Arthur the King;  
Touch'd at the golden  
Cross of the churches,  
Flash'd on the tournament,  
Flicker'd and bicker'd  
From helmet to helmet,  
And last on the forehead  
Of Arthur the blameless  
Rested the Gleam.

Clouds and darkness  
Closed upon Camelot;  
Arthur had vanish'd  
I knew not whither.  
The king who loved me,  
And cannot die;  
For out of the darkness  
Silent and slowly

The Gleam, that had waned to a wisp  
glimmer

On icy fallow  
And faded forest,  
Drew to the valley  
Named of the shadow,  
And slowly brightening  
Out of the glimmer,  
And slowly moving again to a melody  
Yearningly tender,  
Fell on the shadow,  
No longer a shadow,  
But clothed with the Gleam.

And broader and brighter  
The Gleam flying onward,  
Wed to the melody,  
Sang thro' the world;  
And slower and fainter,  
Old and weary,  
But eager to follow,  
I saw, whenever  
In passing it glanced upon  
Hamlet or city,  
That under the Crosses  
The dead man's garden.  
The mortal hillock.  
Would break into blossom;  
And so to the land's  
Last limit I came—  
And can no longer,  
But die rejoicing,  
For thro' the Magic  
Of Him the Mighty,  
Who taught me in childhood,  
There on the border  
Of boundless Ocean,  
And all but in Heaven  
Hovers the Gleam.

Not of the sunlight,  
Not of the moonlight,  
Not of the starlight!  
O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven,  
Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel  
And crowd your canvas,  
And, ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow the Gleam.

FAR—FAR—AWAY

(FOR MUSIC)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the fields  
he knew  
As where earth's green stole into  
heaven's own hue,  
Far—far—away?

What sound was dearest in his native  
dells?  
The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells  
Far—far—away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain  
or joy.  
Thro' those three words would haunt  
him when a boy.  
Far—far—away?

A whisper from his dawn of life? a  
breath  
From some fair dawn beyond the doors  
of death  
Far—far—away?

Far, far, how far? from o'er the gates of  
birth,  
The faint horizons, all the bounds of  
earth,  
Far—far—away?

What charm in words, a charm no words  
could give?  
O dying words, can Music make you live  
Far—far—away? 1889.

THE THROSTLE

"SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.  
I know it, I know it, I know it.  
Light again, leaf again, life again, love  
again!"  
Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.  
Last year you sang it as gladly.  
"New, new, new, new!" Is it then so  
new  
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again,  
young again,"  
Never a prophet so crazy!  
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,  
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again, here, here, here, happy  
year!"

O warble unchidden, unbidden!  
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,  
And all the winters are hidden.  
1889.

THE OAK

LIVE thy Life,  
Young and old,  
Like yon oak,  
Bright in spring,  
Living gold;

Summer-rich  
Then; and then  
Autumn-changed,  
Soberer-hued  
Gold again.

All his leaves  
Fallen at length,  
Look, he stands,  
Trunk and bough,  
Naked strength. 1889.

CROSSING THE BAR<sup>1</sup>

SUNSET and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the  
bar,  
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the  
boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of fare-  
well,  
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time  
and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar. 1889.

<sup>1</sup> "Crossing the Bar" was written in my father's eighty-first year, on a day in October.  
"I said, 'That is the crown of your life's work,' he answered, 'It came in a moment.' He explained the 'Pilot' as 'That Divine and Unseen Who is always guiding us.'  
"A few days before his death he said to me: 'Mind you put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of all editions of my poems.'" (Life of Tennyson, II., 367.)

# ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

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# ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

## SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE<sup>1</sup>

### I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had  
 sung  
 Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-  
 for years,  
 Who each one in a gracious hand appears  
 To bear a gift for mortals, old or young :  
 And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,  
 I saw, in gradual vision through my  
 tears,  
 The sweet, sad years, the melancholy  
 years,  
 Those of my own life, who by turns had  
 flung  
 A shadow across me. Straightway I  
 was 'ware,  
 So weeping, how a mystic Shape did  
 move  
 Behind me, and drew me backward by  
 the hair ;  
 And a voice said in mastery, while I  
 strove,—  
 "Guess now who holds thee?"—"Death,"  
 I said. But, there,  
 The silver answer rang,—“Not Death,  
 but Love.”

### II

BUT only three in all God's universe  
 Have heard this word thou hast said,—  
 Himself, beside  
 Thee speaking, and me listening! and  
 replied  
 One of us . . . *that* was God, . . . and  
 laid the curse  
 So darkly on my eyelids, as to amerce  
 My sight from seeing thee,—that if I  
 had died,  
 The deathweights, placed there, would  
 have signified  
 Less absolute exclusion. “Nay” is  
 worse  
 From God than from all others, O my  
 friend!  
 Men could not part us with their worldly  
 jars,

Nor the seas change us, nor the tempests  
 bend ;  
 Our hands would touch for all the  
 mountain-bars :  
 And, heaven being rolled between us at  
 the end,  
 We should but vow the faster for the  
 stars.

### III<sup>2</sup>

UNLIKE are we, unlike, O princely Heart !  
 Unlike our uses and our destinies.  
 Our ministering two angels look surprise  
 On one another, as they strike athwart  
 Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink  
 thee, art  
 A guest for queens to social pageantries,  
 With gages from a hundred brighter  
 eyes  
 Than tears even can make mine, to play  
 thy part  
 Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to  
 do  
 With looking from the lattice-lights at  
 me,  
 A poor, tired, wandering singer, sing-  
 ing through  
 The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?  
 The chrism is on thine head,—on mine,  
 the dew,—  
 And Death must dig the level where  
 these agree.

### IV

THOU hast thy calling to some palace-  
 floor,  
 Most gracious singer of high poems!  
 where  
 The dancers will break footing, from the  
 care  
 Of watching up thy pregnant lips for  
 more.

<sup>1</sup> See the Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Brown-  
 ing, I, 316-317.

<sup>2</sup> See the Letters of Robert Browning and Eliza-  
 beth Barrett Barrett, I, 74-75. (May 24, 1845.)



And dost thou lift this house's latch too  
 poor  
 For hand of thine? and canst thou think  
 and bear  
 To let thy music drop here unaware  
 In folds of golden fulness at my door?  
 Look up and see the casement broken in,  
 The bats and owlets builders in the roof!  
 My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.  
 Hush, call no echo up in further proof  
 Of desolation! there's a voice within  
 That weeps . . . as thou must sing . . .  
 alone, aloof.

## V

I LIFT my heavy heart up solemnly,  
 As once Electra her sepulchral urn,  
 And looking in thine eyes, I overturn  
 The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see  
 What a great heap of grief lay hid in  
 me,  
 And how the red wild sparkles dimly  
 burn  
 Through the ashen grayness. If thy  
 foot in scorn  
 Could tread them out to darkness utterly,  
 It might be well perhaps. But if in-  
 stead  
 Thou wait beside me for the wind to  
 blow  
 The gray dust up, . . . those laurels on  
 thine head,  
 O my Belovéd, will not shield thee so,  
 That none of all the fires shall scorch  
 and shred  
 The hair beneath. Stand farther off  
 then! go.

VI<sup>1</sup>

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall  
 stand  
 Henceforward in thy shadow. Never-  
 more  
 Alone upon the threshold of my door  
 Of individual life, I shall command  
 The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand  
 Serenely in the sunshine as before,  
 Without the sense of that which I for-  
 bore—  
 Thy touch upon the palm. The widest  
 land  
 Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart  
 in mine  
 With pulses that beat double. What I  
 do

<sup>1</sup> See the Letters of R. B. and E. B. B., I, 74-75, and 144.

And what I dream include thee, as the  
 wine  
 Must taste of its own grapes. And when  
 I sue  
 God for myself, He hears that name of  
 thine,  
 And sees within my eyes the tears of  
 two.

## VII

THE face of all the world is changed, I  
 think,  
 Since first I heard the footsteps of thy  
 soul  
 Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they  
 stole  
 Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink  
 Of obvious death, where I, who thought  
 to sink,  
 Was caught up into love, and taught  
 the whole  
 Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of  
 dole  
 God gave for baptism, I am fain to drink.  
 And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with  
 thee anear.  
 The names of country, heaven, are  
 changed away  
 For where thou art or shalt be, there or  
 here;  
 And this . . . this lute and song . . .  
 loved yesterday,  
 (The singing angels know) are only dear  
 Because thy name moves right in what  
 they say.

VIII<sup>1</sup>

WHAT can I give thee back, O liberal  
 And princely giver, who hast brought  
 the gold  
 And purple of thine heart, unstained,  
 untold,  
 And laid them on the outside of the  
 wall  
 For such as I to take or leave withal.  
 In unexpected largesse? am I cold,  
 Ungrateful, that for these most manifold  
 High gifts, I render nothing back at all?  
 Not so; not cold,—but very poor instead.  
 Ask God who knows. For frequent  
 tears have run  
 The colors from my life, and left so dead  
 And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done  
 To give the same as pillow to thy head.  
 Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

<sup>1</sup> With this Sonnet and the next, compare the Letters, I, 183-5.

## IX

CAN it be right to give what I can give?  
 To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears  
 As salt as mine, and hear the sighing  
 years  
 Re-sighing on my lips renunciative  
 Through those infrequent smiles which  
 fail to live  
 For all thy adjurations? O my fears,  
 That this can scarce be right! We are  
 not peers,  
 So to be lovers; and I own, and grieve,  
 That givers of such gifts as mine are,  
 must  
 Be counted with the ungenerous. Out,  
 alas!  
 I will not soil thy purple with my dust,  
 Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-  
 glass,  
 Nor give thee any love—which were  
 unjust.  
 Beloved, I only love thee! let it pass.

## X

YET, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed  
 And worthy of acceptance. Fire is  
 bright,  
 Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light  
 Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or  
 weed:  
 And love is fire. And when I say at need  
*I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee*—in  
 thy sight  
 I stand transfigured, glorified aright,  
 With conscience of the new rays that  
 proceed  
 Out of my face toward thine. There's  
 nothing low  
 In love, when love the lowest: meanest  
 creatures  
 Who love God, God accepts while loving  
 so.  
 And what I *feel*, across the inferior  
 features  
 Of what I *am*, doth flash itself, and show  
 How that great work of Love enhances  
 Nature's.

## XI

AND therefore if to love can be desert,  
 I am not all unworthy. Cheeks as pale  
 As these you see, and trembling knees  
 that fail  
 To bear the burden of a heavy heart,—  
 This weary minstrel-life that once was  
 girt  
 To climb Aornus, and can scarce avail  
 To pipe now 'gainst the valley nightingale

A melancholy music,—why advert  
 To these things? O Beloved, it is plain  
 I am not of thy worth nor for thy place!  
 And yet, because I love thee, I obtain  
 From that same love this vindicating  
 grace,  
 To live on still in love, and yet in vain,—  
 To bless thee, yet renounce thee to thy  
 face.

## XII

INDEED this very love which is my boast,  
 And which, when rising up from breast  
 to brow,  
 Doth crown me with a ruby large enow  
 To draw men's eyes and prove the inner  
 cost,—  
 This love even, all my worth, to the utter-  
 most,  
 I should not love withal, unless that thou  
 Hadst set me an example, shown me  
 how,  
 When first thine earnest eyes with mine  
 were crossed,  
 And love called love. And thus, I can-  
 not speak  
 Of love even, as a good thing of my own:  
 Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint  
 and weak,  
 And placed it by thee on a golden  
 throne,—  
 And that I love (O soul, we must be  
 meek!)  
 Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

## XIII

AND wilt thou have me fashion into  
 speech  
 The love I bear thee, finding words  
 enough,  
 And hold the torch out, while the winds  
 are rough,  
 Between our faces, to cast light on  
 each?—  
 I drop it at thy feet. I cannot teach  
 My hand to hold my spirit so far off  
 From myself—me—that I should bring  
 thee proof  
 In words, of love hid in me out of reach.  
 Nay, let the silence of my womanhood  
 Commend my woman-love to thy be-  
 lief,—  
 Seeing that I stand unwon, however  
 wooed,  
 And rend the garment of my life, in  
 brief,  
 By a most dauntless, voiceless fortitude,  
 Lest one touch of this heart convey its  
 grief.

XIV<sup>1</sup>

If thou must love me, let it be for nought  
 Except for love's sake only. Do not say  
 "I love her for her smile—her look—her  
 way  
 Of speaking gently,—for a trick of  
 thought  
 That falls in well with mine, and certes  
 brought  
 A sense of pleasant ease on such a  
 day"—  
 For these things in themselves, Belovéd,  
 may  
 Be changed, or change for thee,—and  
 love, so wrought,  
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me  
 for  
 Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks  
 dry,—  
 A creature might forget to weep, who  
 bore  
 Thy comfort long, and lose thy love  
 thereby!  
 But love me for love's sake, that ever-  
 more  
 Thou mayst love on, through love's eter-  
 nity.

## XV

ACCUSE me not, beseech thee, that I  
 wear  
 Too calm and sad a face in front of  
 thine;  
 For we two look two ways, and can-  
 not shine  
 With the same sunlight on our brow  
 and hair.  
 On me thou lookest with no doubting  
 care,  
 As on a bee shut in a crystalline;  
 Since sorrow hath shut me safe in love's  
 divine,  
 And to spread wing and fly in the outer  
 air  
 Were most impossible failure, if I strove  
 To fail so. But I look on thee—on thee—  
 Beholding, besides love, the end of love,  
 Hearing oblivion beyond memory;  
 As one who sits and gazes from above,  
 Over the rivers to the bitter sea.

XVI<sup>2</sup>

AND yet, because thou overcomest so,  
 Because thou art more noble and like a  
 king,

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 256, 274-5, 506, 508.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 545.

Thou canst prevail against my fears and  
 fling  
 Thy purple round me, till my heart  
 shall grow  
 Too close against thine heart henceforth  
 to know  
 How it shook when alone. Why, con-  
 quering  
 May prove as lordly and complete a  
 thing  
 In lifting upward, as in crushing low!  
 And as a vanquished soldier yields his  
 sword  
 To one who lifts him from the bloody  
 earth,  
 Even so, Belovéd, I at last record,  
 Here ends my strife. If thou invite me  
 forth,  
 I rise above abasement at the word.  
 Make thy love larger to enlarge my  
 worth.

## XVII

My poet, thou canst touch on all the  
 notes  
 God set between His After and Before,  
 And strike up and strike off the general  
 roar  
 Of the rushing worlds a melody that  
 floats  
 In a serene air purely. Antidotes  
 Of medicated music, answering for  
 Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst  
 pour  
 From thence into their ears. God's will  
 devotes  
 Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on  
 thine.  
 How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for  
 most use?  
 A hope, to sing by gladly? or a fine  
 Sad memory, with thy songs to inter-  
 fuse?  
 A shade, in which to sing—of palm or  
 pine?  
 A grave, on which to rest from singing?  
 Choose.

## XVIII

I NEVER gave a lock of hair away  
 To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,  
 Which now upon my fingers thought-  
 fully,  
 I ring out to the full brown length and  
 say  
 "Take it." My day of youth went yester-  
 day:  
 My hair no longer bounds to my foot's  
 glee,

Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,  
As girls do, any more; it only may  
Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark  
of tears,  
Taught drooping from the head that  
hangs aside  
Through sorrow's trick. I thought the  
funeral-shears  
Would take this first, but love is justi-  
fied,—  
Take it thou, finding pure, from all those  
years,  
The kiss my mother left here when she  
died.

## XIX

THE soul's Rialto hath its merchandise;  
I barter curl for curl upon that mart,  
And from my poet's forehead to my  
heart  
Receive this lock which outweighs ar-  
gosies,—  
As purple black, as erst to Pindar's eyes  
The dim purpureal tresses gloomed  
athwart  
The nine white Muse-brows. For this  
counterpart,  
The bay-crown's shade, Belovèd, I sur-  
mise,  
Still lingers on thy curl, it is so black!  
Thus, with a fillet of smooth-kissing  
breath,  
I tie the shadows safe from gliding back,  
And lay the gift where nothing hin-  
dereth;  
Here on my heart, as on thy brow, to  
lack  
No natural heat till mine grows cold in  
death.

XX<sup>1</sup>

BEOVED, my Belovèd, when I think  
That thou wast in the world a year ago,  
What time I sat alone here in the snow  
And saw no footprint, heard the silence  
sink  
No moment at thy voice, but, link by  
link,  
Went counting all my chains as if that  
so  
They never could fall off at any blow  
Struck by thy possible hand,—why, thus  
I drink  
Of life's great cup of wonder! Wonder-  
ful,  
Never to feel thee thrill the day or night  
With personal act or speech,—nor ever  
cull

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 147.

Some prescience of thee with the blos-  
soms white  
Thou sawest growing! Atheists are as  
dull,  
Who cannot guess God's presence out of  
sight.

XXI<sup>1</sup>

SAY over again, and yet once over again,  
That thou dost love me. Though the  
word repeated  
Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou  
dost treat it,  
Remember, never to the hill or plain,  
Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-  
strain  
Comes the fresh Spring in all her green  
completed.  
Belovèd, I, amid the darkness greeted  
By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's  
pain  
Cry, "Speak once more—thou lovest!"  
Who can fear  
Too many stars, though each in heaven  
shall roll,  
Too many flowers, though each shall  
crown the year?  
Say thou dost love me, love me, love me  
—toll  
The silver iterance!—only minding,  
Dear,  
To love me also in silence with thy soul.

## XXII

WHEN our two souls stand up erect and  
strong,  
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and  
nigher,  
Until the lengthening wings break into  
fire  
At either curvèd point,—what bitter  
wrong  
Can the earth do to us, that we should  
not long  
Be here contented? Think. In mount-  
ing higher,  
The angels would press on us and aspire  
To drop some golden orb of perfect song  
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay  
Rather on earth, Belovèd,—where the  
unfit  
Contrarious moods of men recoil away  
And isolate pure spirits, and permit  
A place to stand and love in for a day,  
With darkness and the death-hour round  
ing it.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 336.

XXIII<sup>1</sup>

Is it indeed so? If I lay here dead,  
 Wouldst thou miss any life in losing  
 mine?  
 And would the sun for thee more coldly  
 shine  
 Because of grave-damps falling round  
 my head?  
 I marvelled, my Belovèd, when I read  
 Thy thought so in the letter. I am  
 thine—  
 But . . . so much to thee? Can I pour  
 thy wine  
 While my hands tremble? Then my  
 soul, instead  
 Of dreams of death, resumes life's lower  
 range.  
 Then, love me, Love! look on me—  
 breathe on me!  
 As brighter ladies do not count it  
 strange,  
 For love, to give up acres and degree,  
 I yield the grave for thy sake, and ex-  
 change  
 My near sweet view of Heaven, for earth  
 with thee!

## XXIV

LET the world's sharpness, like a clasp-  
 ing knife,  
 Shut in upon itself and do no harm  
 In this close hand of Love, now soft and  
 warm.  
 And let us hear no sound of human  
 strife  
 After the click of the shutting. Life  
 to life—  
 I lean upon thee, Dear, without alarm.  
 And feel as safe as guarded by a charm  
 Against the stab of worldlings, who if  
 rife  
 Are weak to injure. Very whitely still  
 The lilies of our lives may reassure  
 Their blossoms from their roots, ac-  
 cessible  
 Alone to heavenly dews that drop not  
 fewer,  
 Growing straight, out of man's reach,  
 on the hill. [us poor.  
 God only, who made us rich, can make

## XXV

A HEAVY heart, Belovèd, have I borne  
 From year to year until I saw thy face,  
 And sorrow after sorrow took the place  
 Of all those natural joys as lightly worn

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 337, 345, 350.

As the stringed pearls, each lifted in its  
 turn  
 By a beating heart at dance-time.  
 Hopes apace  
 Were changed to long despairs, till God's  
 own grace  
 Could scarcely lift above the world for-  
 lorn  
 My heavy heart. Then *thou* didst bid  
 me bring  
 And let it drop adown thy calmly great  
 Deep being! Fast it sinketh, as a thing  
 Which its own nature doth precipitate,  
 While thine doth close above it, media-  
 ting  
 Between the stars and the unaccom-  
 plished fate.

## XXVI

I LIVED with visions for my company  
 Instead of men and women, years ago,  
 And found them gentle mates, nor  
 thought to know  
 A sweeter music than they played to  
 me.  
 But soon their trailing purple was not  
 free  
 Of this world's dust, their lutes did  
 silent grow,  
 And I myself grew faint and blind be-  
 low  
 Their vanishing eyes. Then *THOU* didst  
 come—to be.  
 Belovèd, what they seemed. Their  
 shining fronts,  
 Their songs, their splendors (better, yet  
 the same,  
 As river-water hallowed into fountains),  
 Met in thee, and from out thee over  
 came  
 My soul with satisfaction of all wants:  
 Because God's gifts put man's best  
 dreams to shame.

XXVII<sup>1</sup>

My own Belovèd, who hast lifted me  
 From this drear flat of earth where I  
 was thrown,  
 And, in betwixt the languid ringlets,  
 blown  
 A life-breath, till the forehead hope-  
 fully  
 Shines out again, as all the angels see,  
 Before thy saving kiss! My own, my  
 own,  
 Who camest to me when the world was  
 gone,

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 595.

And I who looked for only God, found  
*thee!*  
 I find thee; I am safe, and strong, and  
 glad.  
 As one who stands in dewless asphodel  
 Looks backward on the tedious time he  
 had  
 In the upper life,—so I, with bosom-  
 swell,  
 Make witness, here, between the good  
 and bad,  
 That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves  
 as well.

XXVIII<sup>1</sup>

My letters! all dead paper, mute and  
 white!  
 And yet they seem alive and quivering  
 Against my tremulous hands which  
 loose the string  
 And let them drop down on my knee  
 to-night.  
 This said,—he wished to have me in his  
 sight  
 Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in  
 spring  
 To come and touch my hand . . . a  
 simple thing,  
 Yet I wept for it!—this, . . . the paper's  
 light . . .  
 Said, *Dear, I love thee*; and I sank and  
 quailed  
 As if God's future thundered on my  
 past.  
 This said, *I am thine*—and so its ink has  
 paled  
 With lying at my heart that beat too  
 fast.  
 And this . . . O Love, thy words have  
 ill availed  
 If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

## XXIX

I THINK of thee!—my thoughts do twine  
 and bud  
 About thee, as wild vines, about a tree,  
 Put out broad leaves, and soon there's  
 nought to see  
 Except the straggling green which hides  
 the wood.  
 Yet, O my palm-tree, be it understood  
 I will not have my thoughts instead of  
 thee  
 Who art dearer, better! Rather, in-  
 stantly  
 Renew thy presence; as a strong tree  
 should,

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 6, 70, 365.

Rustle thy boughs and set thy trunk all  
 bare,  
 And let these bands of greenery which  
 insphere thee  
 Drop heavily down,—burst, shattered,  
 everywhere!  
 Because, in this deep joy to see and hear  
 thee  
 And breathe within thy shadow a new  
 air,  
 I do not think of thee—I am too near  
 thee.

## XXX

I SEE thine image through my tears to-  
 night,  
 And yet to-day I saw thee smiling.  
 How  
 Refer the cause?—Beloved, is it thou  
 Or I, who makes me sad? The acolyte  
 Amid the chanted joy and thankful rite  
 May so fall flat, with pale insensate  
 brow,  
 On the altar-stair. I hear thy voice and  
 vow,  
 Perplexed, uncertain, since thou art  
 out of sight,  
 As he, in his swooning ears, the choir's  
 Amen.  
 Beloved, dost thou love? or did I see all  
 The glory as I dreamed, and fainted  
 when  
 Too vehement light dilated my ideal,  
 For my soul's eyes? Will that light  
 come again,  
 As now these tears come—falling hot  
 and real?

## XXXI

THOU comest! all is said without a word.  
 I sit beneath thy looks as children do  
 In the noon-sun, with souls that tremble  
 through  
 Their happy eyelids from an unaverred  
 Yet prodigal inward joy. Behold, I  
 erred  
 In that last doubt! and yet I cannot rue  
 The sin most, but the occasion—that we  
 two  
 Should for a moment stand unminis-  
 tered  
 By a mutual presence. Ah, keep near  
 and close,  
 Thou dovelike help! and, when my  
 fears would rise,  
 With thy broad heart serenely inter-  
 pose:  
 Brood down with thy divine sufficiencies

These thoughts which tremble when  
bereft of those,  
Like callow birds left desert to the  
skies.

## XXXII

THE first time that the sun rose on thine  
oath  
To love me, I looked forward to the  
moon  
To slacken all those bonds which seemed  
too soon  
And quickly tied to make a lasting  
troth.  
Quick-loving hearts, I thought, may  
quickly loathe;  
And, looking on myself, I seemed not  
one  
For such man's love;—more like an out-  
of-tune  
Worn viol, a good singer would be  
wroth  
To spoil his song with, and which,  
snatched in haste,  
Is laid down at the first ill-sounding  
note.  
I did not wrong myself so, but I placed  
A wrong on *thee*. For perfect strains  
may float  
'Neath master-hands, from instruments  
defaced,—  
And great souls, at one stroke, may do  
and doat.

## XXXIII

YES, call me by my pet-name! let me  
hear  
The name I used to run at, when a child,  
From innocent play, and leave the cow-  
slips piled,  
To glance up in some face that proved  
me dear  
With the look of its eyes. I miss the  
clear  
Fond voices which, being drawn and  
reconciled  
Into the music of Heaven's undefiled,  
Call me no longer. Silence on the bier.  
While I call God—call God!—So let thy  
mouth  
Be heir to those who are now exanimate.  
Gather the north flowers to complete the  
south,  
And catch the early love up in the late.  
Yes, call me by that name,—and I, in  
truth.  
With the same heart, will answer and  
not wait.

## XXXIV

WITH the same heart, I said, I'll answer  
thee  
As those, when thou shalt call me by my  
name—  
Lo, the vain promise! is the same, the  
same,  
Perplexed and ruffled by life's strategy!  
When called before, I told how hastily  
I dropped my flowers or brake off from a  
game,  
To run and answer with the smile that  
came  
At play last moment, and went on with  
me  
Through my obedience. When I answer  
now,  
I drop a grave thought, break from soli-  
tude;  
Yet still my heart goes to thee—ponder  
how—  
Not as to a single good, but all my good!<sup>1</sup>  
Lay thy hand on it, best one, and allow  
That no child's foot could run fast as  
this blood.

## XXXV

IF I leave all for thee, wilt thou ex-  
change  
And be all to me? Shall I never miss  
Home-talk and blessing and the common  
kiss  
That comes to each in turn, nor count it  
strange,  
When I look up, to drop on a new range  
Of walls and floors, another home than  
this?  
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me  
which is  
Filled by dead eyes too tender to know  
change?  
That's hardest. If to conquer love, has  
tried,  
To conquer grief, tries more, as all  
things prove;  
For grief indeed is love and grief beside.  
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.  
Yet love me—wilt thou? Open thine  
heart wide,  
And fold within the wet wings of thy  
dove.

## XXXVI

WHEN we met first and loved, I did not  
build  
Upon the event with marble. Could it  
mean

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 361.

To last, a love set pendulous between  
Sorrow and sorrow? Nay, I rather  
thrilled,  
Distrusting every light that seemed to  
gild  
The onward path, and feared to overlean  
A finger even. And, though I have  
grown serene  
And strong since then, I think that God  
has willed  
A still renewable fear . . . O love, O  
troth . . .  
Lest these enclasped hands should never  
hold,  
This mutual kiss drop down between us  
both  
As an unowned thing, once the lips being  
cold.  
And Love, be false! if *he*, to keep one  
oath,  
Must lose one joy, by his life's star fore-  
told.

## XXXVII

PARDON, oh, pardon, that my soul should  
make,  
Of all that strong divineness which I  
know  
For thine and thee, an image only so  
Formed of the sand, and fit to shift and  
break.  
It is that distant years which did not  
take  
Thy sovranity, recoiling with a blow,  
Have forced my swimming brain to un-  
dergo  
Their doubt and dread, and blindly to  
forsake  
Thy purity of likeness and distort  
Thy worthiest love to a worthless coun-  
terfeit:  
As if a shipwrecked Pagan, safe in port,  
His guardian sea-god to commemorate,  
Should set a sculptured porpoise, gills a-  
snort  
And vibrant tail, within the temple-gate.

## XXXVIII

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only  
kissed  
The fingers of this hand wherewith I  
write;  
And ever since, it grew more clean and  
white,  
Slow to world-greetings, quick with its  
"Oh, list."  
When the angels speak. A ring of  
amethyst

I could not wear here, plainer to my  
sight,  
Than that first kiss. The second passed  
in height  
The first, and sought the forehead, and  
half missed,  
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!  
That was the chrism of love, which  
love's own crown,  
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.  
The third upon my lips was folded down  
In perfect, purple state; since when, in-  
deed,  
I have been proud and said, "My love,  
my own."

## XXXIX

BECAUSE thou hast the power and own'st  
the grace  
To look through and behind this mask  
of me  
(Against which years have beat thus  
blanchingly  
With their rains), and behold my soul's  
true face,  
The dim and weary witness of life's  
race,—  
Because thou hast the faith and love to  
see,  
Through that same soul's distracting  
lethargy,  
The patient angel waiting for a place  
In the new Heavens,—because nor sin  
nor woe,  
Nor God's infliction, nor death's neigh-  
borhood,  
Nor all which others viewing, turn to  
go,  
Nor all which makes me tired of all, self-  
viewed,—  
Nothing repels thee, . . . Dearest, teach  
me so  
To pour out gratitude, as thou dost,  
good!

## XL

OH, yes! they love through all this world  
of ours!  
I will not gainsay love, called love  
forsooth,  
I have heard love talked in my early  
youth,  
And since, not so long back but that the  
flowers  
Then gathered, smell still. Mussulmans  
and Giaours  
Throw kerchiefs at a smile, and have no  
ruth



For any weeping. Polypheme's white  
tooth  
Slips on the nut if, after frequent  
showers,  
The shell is over-smooth,—and not so  
much  
Will turn the thing called love, aside to  
hate,  
Or else to oblivion. But thou art not  
such  
A lover, my Belovèd! thou canst wait  
Through sorrow and sickness, to bring  
souls to touch,  
And think it soon when others cry "Too  
late."

## XLI

I THANK all who have loved me in their  
hearts,  
With thanks and love from mine. Deep  
thanks to all  
Who paused a little near the prison-wall  
To hear my music in its louder parts  
Ere they went onward, each one to the  
mart's  
Or temple's occupation, beyond call.  
But thou, who, in my voice's sink and  
fall  
When the sob took it, thy divinest Art's  
Own instrument didst drop down at thy  
foot  
To hearken what I said between my  
tears, . . .  
Instruct me how to thank thee! Oh, to  
shoot  
My soul's full meaning into future years.  
That *they* should lend it utterance, and  
salute  
Love that endures, from Life that dis-  
appears!

## XLII

"*My future will not copy fair my  
past*"—<sup>1</sup>  
I wrote that once; and thinking at my  
side  
My ministering life-angel justified  
The word by his appealing look upcast  
To the white throne of God, I turned at  
last,  
And there, instead, saw thee, not unallied  
To angels in thy soul! Then I, long  
tried  
By natural ills, received the comfort fast,  
While budding, at thy sight, my pilgrim's  
staff

<sup>1</sup> A sonnet of Mrs. Browning's, of 1844, begins with this line. See also the Letters, I, 281.

Gave out green leaves with morning  
dews imperaled.

I seek no copy now of life's first half:  
Leave here the pages with long musing  
curled,  
And write me new my future's epigraph,  
New angel mine, unhopèd for in the  
world!

## XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the  
ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and  
height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of  
sight  
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
I love thee to the level of everyday's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for  
Right;  
I love thee purely, as they turn from  
Praise.  
I love thee with the passion put to use  
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's  
faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints,—I love thee with  
the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God  
choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.

## XLIV

BELOVED, thou hast brought me many  
flowers  
Plucked in the garden, all the summer  
through  
And winter, and it seemed as if they grew  
In this close room, nor missed the sun  
and showers.  
So, in the like name of that love of ours,  
Take back these thoughts which here un-  
folded too,  
And which on warm and cold days I  
withdrew  
From my heart's ground. Indeed, those  
beds and bowers  
Be overgrown with bitter weeds and rue,  
And wait thy weeding; yet here's eglan-  
tine,  
Here's ivy!—take them, as I used to do  
Thy flowers, and keep them where they  
shall not pine.  
Instruct thine eyes to keep their colors  
true,  
And tell thy soul their roots are left in  
mine. [1847.] 1850.

# ROBERT BROWNING

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## ROBERT BROWNING

### SONGS FROM PARACELSUS

HEAP cassia, sandal-buds and stripes  
Of labdanum, and aloe-balls,  
Smeared with dull nard an Indian wipes  
From out her hair: such balsam falls  
Down sea-side mountain pedestals,  
From tree-tops where tired winds are  
fain,  
Spent with the vast and howling main,  
To treasure half their island-gain.

And strew faint sweetness from some  
old  
Egyptian's fine worm-eaten shroud  
Which breaks to dust when once un-  
rolled;  
Or shredded perfume, like a cloud  
From closet long to quiet vowed,  
With moth and dropping arras hung,  
Mouldering her lute and books among,  
As when a queen, long dead, was young.

Over the sea our galleys went,  
With cleaving prows in order brave  
To a speeding wind and a bounding  
wave,

A gallant armament:  
Each bark built out of a forest-tree  
Left leafy and rough as first it grew.  
And nailed all over the gaping sides,  
Within and without, with black bull-  
hides,

Seethed in fat and suppled in flame,  
To bear the playful billows' game:  
So, each good ship was rude to see,  
Rude and bare to the outward view,

But each upbore a stately tent  
Where cedar pales in scented row  
Kept out the flakes of the dancing brine,  
And an awning drooped the mast below,  
In fold on fold of the purple fine,

That neither noontide nor starshine  
Nor moonlight cold which maketh mad,  
Might pierce the regal tenement.

When the sun dawned, oh, gay and glad  
We set the sail and plied the oar;  
But when the night-wind blew like  
breath,

For joy of one day's voyage more,  
We sang together on the wide sea,  
Like men at peace on a peaceful shore:  
Each sail was loosed to the wind so free.  
Each helm made sure by the twilight  
star,

And in a sleep as calm as death,  
We, the voyagers from afar,  
Lay stretched along, each weary crew  
In a circle round its wondrous tent  
Whence gleamed soft light and curled  
rich scent,

And with light and perfume, music  
too:

So the stars wheeled round, and the  
darkness past.

And at morn we started beside the mast.  
And still each ship was sailing fast.

Now, one morn, land appeared—a speck  
Dim trembling betwixt sea and sky:

“Avoid it,” cried our pilot, “check  
The shout, restrain the eager eye!”

But the heaving sea was black behind  
For many a night and many a day,  
And land, though but a rock, drew  
nigh;

So, we broke the cedar pales away,  
Let the purple awning flap in the wind.

And a statue bright was on every  
deck!

We shouted, every man of us,  
And steered right into the harbor thus.  
With pomp and pæan glorious.

A hundred shapes of lucid stone!  
All day we built its shrine for each,

A shrine of rock for every one,  
Nor paused till in the westering sun  
We sat together on the beach  
To sing because our task was done.  
When lo! what shouts and merry songs!  
What laughter all the distance stirs!  
A loaded raft with happy throngs  
Of gentle islanders!  
"Our isles are just at hand," they  
cried,  
"Like cloudlets faint in even sleep-  
ing.  
Our temple-gates are opened wide,  
Our olive-groves thick shade are keep-  
ing  
For these majestic forms"—they cried.  
Oh, then we awoke with sudden start  
From our deep dream, and knew, too  
late,  
How bare the rock, how desolate,  
Which had received our precious  
freight  
Yet we called out—"Depart!  
Our gifts, once given, must here abide.  
Our work is done; we have no heart  
To mar our work,"—we cried. 1835.

PORPHYRIA'S LOVER<sup>1</sup>

THE rain set early in to-night,  
The sullen wind was soon awake,  
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,  
And did its worst to vex the lake:  
I listened with heart fit to break.  
When glided in Porphyria; straight  
She shut the cold out and the storm,  
And kneeled and made the cheerless  
grate  
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;  
Which done, she rose, and from her  
form  
Withdrew the dripping cloak and  
shawl,  
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied  
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,

<sup>1</sup> This is the earliest of Browning's great series of dramatic poems in lyric form. It was first printed in the *Monthly Repository*, 1836, with *Johannes Agricola in Meditation*; was then included in the *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842); and is now classed among the *Dramatic Romances*. Most of Browning's poems are simply dramatic monologues, without stage directions, often without even the name of the speaker. The reader must remember that it is not Browning who is speaking or telling the story; and must first notice *who is speaking*, and *under what circumstances*. Once this is done, most of the alleged "obscurity" of Browning will be found to have disappeared forever.

And, last, she sat down by my side  
And called me. When no voice re-  
plied,  
She put my arm about her waist,  
And made her smooth white shoulder  
bare  
And all her yellow hair displaced,  
And, stooping, made my cheek lie  
there,  
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,  
Murmuring how she loved me—she  
Too weak, for all her heart's en-  
deavor,  
To set its struggling passion free  
From pride, and vainer ties dis sever,  
And give herself to me forever.  
But passion sometimes would prevail,  
Nor could to-night's gay feast re-  
strain  
A sudden thought of one so pale  
For love of her, and all in vain:  
So, she was come through wind and  
rain.  
Be sure I looked up at her eyes  
Happy and proud; at last I knew  
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise  
Made my heart swell, and still it  
grew  
While I debated what to do.  
That moment she was mine, mine,  
fair,  
Perfectly pure and good: I found  
A thing to do, and all her hair  
In one long yellow string I wound  
Three times her little throat around,  
And strangled her. No pain felt she;  
I am quite sure she felt no pain.  
As a shut bud that holds a bee,  
I warily oped her lids; again  
Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.  
And I untightened next the tress  
About her neck; her cheek once  
more  
Blushed bright beneath my burning  
kiss:  
I propped her head up as before,  
Only, this time my shoulder bore  
Her head, which droops upon it still:  
The smiling rosy little head,  
So glad it has its utmost will,  
That all it scorned at once is fled,  
And I, its love, am gained instead!  
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how  
Her darling one wish would be heard.  
And thus we sit together now,  
And all night long we have not  
stirred,  
And yet God has not said a word!

1836.

## PIPPA PASSES

## A DRAMA

## PERSONS

PIPPA  
OTTIMA  
SEBALD  
Foreign Students  
GOTTLIEB  
SCHRAMM

JULES  
PHENE  
Austrian Police  
BLUPHOCKS  
LUIGI and his mother  
Poor Girls  
MONSIGNOR and his attendants

## INTRODUCTION

NEW YEAR'S DAY AT ASOLO IN THE TRE-  
VISAN

*A large mean airy chamber. A girl, PIPPA, from  
the silk-mills, springing out of bed.*

DAY !

Faster and more fast,  
O'er night's brim, day boils at last :  
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's  
brim

Where spurting and suppressed it lay,  
For not a froth-flake touched the rim  
Of yonder gap in the solid gray  
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away ;  
But forth one wavelet, then another,  
curled,

Till the whole sunrise, not to be sup-  
pressed,

Rose, reddened, and its seething breast  
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then  
overflowed the world.

Oh Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,  
A mite of my twelve-hours' treasure,  
The least of thy gazes or glances,  
(Be they grants thou art bound to or gifts  
above measure)

One of thy choices or one of thy chances,  
(Be they tasks God imposed thee or  
freaks at thy pleasure)

—My Day, if I squander such labor or  
leisure.

Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on  
me !

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely  
flowing.

Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help  
and good—

Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming,  
going.

As if earth turned from work in game-  
some mood—

All shall be mine ! But thou must treat  
me not

As prosperous ones are treated, those  
who live

At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,  
In readiness to take what thou wilt give.  
And free to let alone what thou re-  
fusest ;

For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest  
Me, who am only Pippa,—old-year's sor-  
row,

Cast off last night, will come again to-  
morrow :

Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall  
borrow

Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's  
sorrow.

All other men and women that this  
earth

Belongs to, who all days alike possess,  
Make general plenty cure particular  
dearth,

Get more joy one way, if another, less :  
Thou art my single day, God lends to  
leaven

What were all earth else, with a feel of  
heaven,—

Sole light that helps me through the  
year, thy sun's !

Try now ! Take Asolo's Four Happiest  
Ones—

And let thy morning rain on that superb  
Great haughty Ottima ; can rain disturb  
Her Sebald's homage ? All the while  
thy rain

Beats fiercest on her shrub-house win-  
dow pane

He will but press the closer, breathe  
more warm

Against her cheek ; how should she  
mind the storm ?

And, morning past, if mid-day shed a  
gloom

O'er Jules and Phene,—what care bride  
and groom

Save for their dear selves ? 'T is their  
marriage day ;

And while they leave church and go  
home their way,

clasp hand, within each breast  
 would be  
 beams and pleasant weather spite of  
 thee.  
 for another trial, obscure thy eve  
 mist,—will Luigi and his mother  
 grieve—  
 lady and her child, unmatched, for-  
 sooth,  
 in her age, as Luigi in his youth,  
 rue content? The cheerful town,  
 warm, close  
 safe, the sooner that thou art mo-  
 rose,  
 ves them. And yet once again,  
 outbreak  
 orm at night on Monsignor, they  
 make  
 stir about,—whom they expect  
 from Rome  
 sit Asolo, his brothers' home,  
 say here masses proper to release  
 ul from pain,—what storm dares  
 hurt his peace?  
 would he pray, with his own  
 thoughts to ward  
 hunder off, nor want the angels'  
 guard.  
 Pippa—just one such mischance  
 would spoil  
 lay that lightens the next twelve-  
 month's toil  
 ear some silk-winding, coil on coil!  
 d here I let time slip for naught!  
 you foolhardy sunbeam, caught  
 a single splash from my ewer!  
 hat would mock the best pursuer,  
 my basin over-deep?  
 plash of water ruins you asleep,  
 up, up, fleet your brilliant bits  
 ling and counterwheeling,  
 ng, broken beyond healing:  
 grow together on the ceiling!  
 will task your wits.  
 ver it was quenched fire first,  
 hoped to see  
 d! after morsel flee  
 errily, as giddily . . .  
 time, what lights my sunbeam on,  
 e settles by degrees the radiant  
 cripple?  
 s it surely blown, my martagon?  
 blown and ruddy as St. Agnes'  
 nipple,  
 p as the flesh-bunch on some Turk  
 bird's poll!  
 re if corals, branching 'neath the  
 ripple [roll  
 ean, bud there,—fairies watch un-

Such turban-flowers; I say, such lamps  
 disperse  
 Thick red flame through that dusk green  
 universe!  
 I am queen of thee, floweret!  
 And each fleshy blossom  
 Preserve I not—(safer  
 Than leaves that embower it,  
 Or shells that embosom)  
 —From weevil and chafer?  
 Laugh through my pane then; solicit  
 the bee;  
 Gibe him, be sure; and, in midst of thy  
 glee,  
 Love thy queen, worship me!  
 —Worship whom else? For am I not,  
 this day,  
 Whate'er I please? What shall I please  
 to-day?  
 My morn, noon, eve and night—how  
 spend my day?  
 To-morrow I must be Pippa who winds  
 silk,  
 The whole year round, to earn just bread  
 and milk:  
 But, this one day, I have leave to go,  
 And play out my fancy's fullest games;  
 I may fancy all day—and it shall be so—  
 That I taste of the pleasures, am called  
 by the names  
 Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo!  
 See! Up the hillside yonder, through the  
 morning,  
 Some one shall love me, as the world  
 calls love:  
 I am no less than Ottima, take warning!  
 The gardens, and the great stone house  
 above,  
 And other house for shrubs, all glass in  
 front,  
 Are mine; where Sebald steals, as he is  
 wont,  
 To court me, while old Luca yet reposes:  
 And therefore, till the shrub-house door  
 uncloses,  
 I . . . what now?—give abundant cause  
 for prate  
 About me—Ottima, I mean—of late,  
 Too bold, too confident she'll still face  
 down  
 The spitefullest of talkers in our town.  
 How we talk in the little town below!  
 But love, love, love—there's better  
 love, I know!  
 This foolish love was only day's first  
 offer;  
 I choose my next love to defy the scoffer:



For do not our Bride and Bridegroom  
sally

Out of Possagno church at noon?

Their house looks over Orcana valley:

Why should not I be the bride as soon

As Ottima? For I saw, beside,

Arrive last night that little bride—

Saw, if you call it seeing her, one flash  
Of the pale snow-pure cheek and black  
bright tresses,

Blacker than all except the black eye-  
lash;

I wonder she contrives those lids no  
dresses!

—So strict was she, the veil

Should cover close her pale

Pure cheeks—a bride to look at and  
scarce touch,

Scarce touch, remember, Jules! For are  
not such

Used to be tended, flower-like, every  
feature,

As if one's breath would fray the lily of  
a creature?

A soft and easy life these ladies lead:  
Whiteness in us were wonderful in-  
deed.

Oh, save that brow its virgin dimness,

Keep that foot its lady primness,

Let those ankles never swerve

From their exquisite reserve,

Yet have to trip along the streets like me,

All but naked to the knee!

How will she ever grant her Jules a bliss

So startling as her real first infant kiss?

Oh, no—not envy, this!

—Not envy, sure!—for if you gave me  
Leave to take or to refuse.

In earnest, do you think I'd choose

That sort of new love to enslave me?

Mine should have lapped me round from  
the beginning;

As little fear of losing it as winning:

Lovers grow cold, men learn to hate  
their wives,

And only parents' love can last our lives.

At eve the Son and Mother, gentle pair.

Commune inside our turret: what pre-  
vents

My being Luigi? While that mossy lair  
Of lizards through the winter-time is  
stirred

With each to each imparting sweet in-  
tents

For this new-year, as brooding bird to  
bird—

(For I observe of late, the evening walk  
Of Luigi and his mother, always ends

Inside our ruined turret, where they talk,  
Calmer than lovers, yet more kind than  
friends)

—Let me be cared about, kept out of  
harm,

And schemed for, safe in love as with  
a charm;

Let me be Luigi! If I only knew

What was my mother's face—my father,  
too!

Nay, if you come to that, best love of all  
Is God's; then why not have God's love  
befall

Myself as, in the palace by the Dome,  
Monsignor?—who to-night will bless the  
home

Of his dead brother; and God bless in  
turn

That heart which beats, those eyes which  
mildly burn

With love for all men! I, to-night at  
least,

Would be that holy and beloved priest.

Now wait!—even I already seem to  
share

In God's love: what does New-year's  
hymn declare?

What other meaning do those verses  
bear?

*All service ranks the same with God:*

*If now, as formerly he trod*

*Paradise, his presence fills*

*Our earth, each only as God wills*

*Can work—God's puppets, best and  
worst,*

*Are we; there is no last nor first.*

Say not "a small event!" Why  
"small?"

*Costs it more pain that this, ye call*

*A "great event," should come to  
pass,*

*Than that? Untwine me from the  
mass*

*Of deeds which make up life, one deed  
Power shall fall short in or exceed!*

And more of it, and more of it!—oh yes—  
I will pass each, and see their happiness,  
And envy none—being just as great, no  
doubt,

Useful to men, and dear to God as they!  
A pretty thing to care about

So mightily, this single holiday!

But let the sun shine! Wherefore re-  
pine?

—With thee to lead me, O Day of mine,

own the grass path gray with dew,  
 Under the pine-wood, blind with boughs,  
 Where the swallow never flew  
 Or yet cicada dared carouse—  
 O, dared carouse!

*[She enters the street.]*

# I. MORNING

*Up the Hillside, inside the Shrub-house. LUCA'S  
 WIFE, OTTIMA, and her Paramour, the German  
 SEBALD.*

*Sebald. [sings] Let the watching  
 lids wink!  
 Day's ablaze with eyes, think!  
 Deep into the night, drink!*

*Ottima. Night? Such may be your  
 Rhineland nights, perhaps;  
 But this blood-red beam through the  
 shutter's chink  
 —We call such light, the morning: let  
 us see!  
 Find how you grope your way, though!  
 How these tall  
 faked geraniums straggle! Push the  
 lattice  
 behind that frame!—Nay, do I bid you?*

*—Sebald,  
 It shakes the dust down on me! Why,  
 of course  
 The slide-bolt catches. Well, are you  
 content,  
 Or must I find you something else to  
 spoil?  
 Kiss and be friends, my Sebald! Is 't  
 full morning?  
 Oh, don't speak then!*

*Seb. Ay, thus it used to be!  
 Ever your house was, I remember, shut  
 'till mid-day; I observed that, as I  
 strolled*

*On mornings through the vale here;  
 country girls*

*Vere noisy, washing garments in the  
 brook,*

*Finds drove the slow white oxen up the  
 hills:*

*But no, your house was mute, would  
 ope no eye!*

*And wisely: you were plotting one thing  
 there,*

*Nature, another outside. I looked up—  
 tough white wood shutters, rusty iron  
 bars,*

*Silent as death, blind in a flood of light.  
 Oh, I remember!—and the peasants  
 laughed*

*And said, "The old man sleeps with the  
 young wife."*

*This house was his, this chair, this win-  
 dow—his.*

*Otti. Ah, the clear morning! I can  
 see Saint Mark's;  
 That black streak is the belfry. Stop:  
 Vicenza*

*Should lie . . . there's Padua, plain  
 enough, that blue!*

*Look o'er my shoulder, follow my finger!  
 Seb. Morning?*

*It seems to me a night with a sun added.  
 Where's dew, where's freshness? That  
 bruised plant, I bruised*

*In getting through the lattice yestereve,  
 Droops as it did. See, here's my elbow's  
 mark*

*I' the dust o' the sill.*

*Otti. Oh, shut the lattice, pray!*

*Seb. Let me lean out. I cannot scent  
 blood here,*

*Foul as the morn may be.*

*There, shut the world out!*

*How do you feel now, Ottima? There,  
 curse*

*The world and all outside! Let us throw  
 off*

*This mask: how do you bear yourself?*

*Let's out*

*With all of it!*

*Otti. Best never speak of it.*

*Seb. Best speak again and yet again  
 of it,*

*Till words cease to be more than words.*

*"His blood,"*

*For instance—let those two words mean,*

*"His blood"*

*And nothing more. Notice, I'll say  
 them now, "His blood."*

*Otti. Assuredly if I repented*

*The deed—*

*Seb. Repent? Who should repent,  
 or why?*

*What puts that in your head? Did I  
 once say*

*That I repented?*

*Otti. No; I said the deed . . .*

*Seb. "The deed" and "the event"—  
 just now it was*

*"Our passion's fruit"—the devil take  
 such cant!*

*Say, once and always, Luca was a wittol,  
 I am his cut-throat, you are . . .*

*Otti. Here's the wine:  
 I brought it when we left the house  
 above.*

*And glasses too—wine of both sorts.  
 Black? White then?*

*Seb. But am not I his cut-throat?  
 What are you?*

*Otti.* There trudges on his business  
from the Duomo  
Benet the Capuchin, with his brown  
hood  
And bare feet; always in one place at  
church,  
Close under the stone wall by the south  
entry.  
I used to take him for a brown cold  
piece  
Of the wall's self, as out of it he rose  
To let me pass—at first, I say, I used:  
Now, so has that dumb figure fastened  
on me,  
I rather should account the plastered  
wall  
A piece of him, so chilly does it strike.  
This, Sebald?

*Seb.* No, the white wine—the white  
wine!  
Well, Ottima, I promised no new year  
Should rise on us the ancient shameful  
way;  
Nor does it rise. Pour on! To your  
black eyes!  
Do you remember last damned New  
Year's day?

*Otti.* You brought those foreign  
prints. We looked at them  
Over the wine and fruit. I had to  
scheme  
To get him from the fire. Nothing but  
saying  
His own set wants the proof-mark,  
roused him up  
To hunt them out.

*Seb.* Faith, he is not alive  
To fondle you before my face.

*Otti.* Do you  
Fondle me then! Who means to take  
your life  
For that, my Sebald?

*Seb.* Hark you, Ottima!  
One thing to guard against. We'll not  
make much  
One of the other—that is, not make  
more  
Parade of warmth, childish officious  
coil,  
Than yesterday: as if, sweet, I supposed  
Proof upon proof were needed now, now  
first.

To show I love you—yes, still love you—  
love you  
In spite of Luca and what's come to him  
—Sure sign we had him ever in our  
thoughts,  
White sneering old reproachful face and  
all!

We'll even quarrel, love, at times, as if  
We still could lose each other, were not  
tied

By this: conceive you?

*Otti.* Love!

*Seb.* Not tied so sure!  
Because though I was wrought upon,  
have struck

His insolence back into him—am I  
So surely yours?—therefore forever  
yours?

*Otti.* Love, to be wise, (one counsel  
pays another,)

Should we have—months ago, when first  
we loved,

For instance that May morning we two  
stole

Under the green ascent of sycamores—  
If we had come upon a thing like that  
Suddenly . . .

*Seb.* "A thing"—there again—"a  
thing!"

*Otti.* Then, Venus' body, had we  
come upon

My husband Luca Gaddi's murdered  
corpse

Within there, at his couch-foot, covered  
close—

Would you have pored upon it? Why  
persist

In poring now upon it? For 't is here  
As much as there in the deserted house:  
You cannot rid your eyes of it. For me.  
Now he is dead I hate him worse: I  
hate . . .

Dare you stay here? I would go back  
and hold

His two dead hands, and say, "I hate  
you worse,

Luca, than" . . .

*Seb.* Off, off—take your hands off  
mine.

'T is the hot evening—off! oh, morning  
is it?

*Otti.* There's one thing must be done;  
you know what thing.

Come in and help to carry. We may  
sleep [night.

Anywhere in the whole wide house to—  
*Seb.* What would come, think you, if  
we let him lie

Just as he is? Let him lie there until  
The angels take him! He is turned by  
this

Off from his face beside, as you will see.

*Otti.* This dusty pane might serve for  
looking-glass.

Three, four—four gray hairs! Is it so  
you said

A plait of hair should wave across my neck ?

No—this way.

*Seb.* Ottima, I would give your neck,  
Each splendid shoulder, both those  
breasts of yours,

That this were undone! Killing! Kill  
the world,

So Luca lives again!—ay, lives to sputter  
His fulsome dotage on you—yes, and  
feign

Surprise that I return at eve to sup,  
When all the morning I was loitering  
here—

Bid me dispatch my business and begone.  
I would . . .

*Otti.* See!

*Seb.* No, I'll finish. Do you think  
I fear to speak the bare truth once for  
all ?

All we have talked of, is, at bottom, fine  
To suffer ; there's a recompense in guilt ;  
One must be venturous and fortunate :  
What is one young for, else ? In age  
we'll sigh

O'er the wild reckless wicked days flown  
over ;

Still, we have lived : the vice was in its  
place.

But to have eaten Luca's bread, have  
worn

His clothes, have felt his money swell  
my purse—

Do lovers in romances sin that way ?

Why, I was starving when I used to call  
And teach you music, starving while  
you plucked me

These flowers to smell !

*Otti.* My poor lost friend !

*Seb.* He gave me  
Life, nothing less : what if he did re-  
proach

My perfidy, and threaten, and do more—  
Had he no right ? What was to wonder  
at ?

He sat by us at table quietly :

Why must you lean across till our cheeks  
touched ?

Could he do less than make pretence to  
strike ?

'Tis not the crime's sake—I'd commit  
ten crimes

Greater, to have this crime wiped out,  
undone !

And you—O how feel you ? Feel you  
for me !

*Otti.* Well then, I love you better  
now than ever, [you)—  
And best (look at me while I speak to

Best for the crime ; nor do I grieve, in  
truth,

This mask, this simulated ignorance,  
This affectation of simplicity,  
Falls off our crime ; this naked crime of  
ours

May not now be looked over : look it  
down !

Great ? let it be great ; but the joys it  
brought.

Pay they or no its price ? Come ; they  
or it !

Speak not ! The past, would you give  
up the past

Such as it is, pleasure and crime to-  
gether ?

Give up that noon I owned my love for  
you ?

The garden's silence : even the single  
bee

Persisting in his toil, suddenly stopped,  
And where he hid you only could sur-  
mise

By some campanula chalice set a-swing.  
Who stammered—" Yes, I love you ? "

*Seb.* And I drew  
Back ; put far back your face with both  
my hands

Lest you should grow too full of me—  
your face

So seemed athirst for my whole soul and  
body !

*Otti.* And when I ventured to receive  
you here,

Made you steal hither in the mornings—  
*Seb.* When

I used to look up 'neath the shrub-house  
here,

Till the red fire on its glazed windows  
spread

To a yellow haze ?

*Otti.* Ah—my sign was, the sun  
Inflamed the sere side of yon chestnut-  
tree

Nipped by the first frost.

*Seb.* You would always laugh  
At my wet boots : I had to stride through  
grass

Over my ankles.

*Otti.* Then our crowning night !  
*Seb.* The July night ?

*Otti.* The day of it too, Sebald !  
When heaven's pillars seemed o'erbowed  
with heat,

Its black-blue canopy suffered descend  
Close on us both, to weigh down each to  
each,

And smother up all life except our life.  
So lay we till the storm came.

*Seb.* How it came !  
*Otti.* Buried in woods we lay, you  
 recollect ;  
 Swift ran the searching tempest over-  
 head ;  
 And ever and anon some bright white  
 shaft  
 Burned through the pine-tree roof, here  
 burned and there,  
 As if God's messenger through the close  
 wood screen  
 Plunged and replunged his weapon at a  
 venture,  
 Feeling for guilty thee and me : then  
 broke  
 The thunder like a whole sea overhead—  
*Seb.* Yes !  
*Otti.*—While I stretched myself upon  
 you, hands  
 To hands, my mouth to your hot mouth,  
 and shook  
 All my locks loose, and covered you with  
 them—  
 You, Sebald, the same you !  
*Seb.* Slower, Ottima !  
*Otti.* And as we lay—  
*Seb.* Less vehemently ! Love me !  
 Forgive me ! Take not words, mere  
 words, to heart !  
 Your breath is worse than wine. Breathe  
 slow, speak slow !  
 Do not lean on me !  
*Otti.* Sebald, as we lay,  
 Rising and falling only with our pants,  
 Who said, " Let death come now ! 'T is  
 right to die !  
 Right to be punished ! Naught completes  
 such bliss  
 But woe ! " Who said that ?  
*Seb.* How did we ever rise ?  
 Was 't that we slept ? Why did it end ?  
*Otti.* I felt you  
 Taper into a point the ruffled ends  
 Of my loose locks 'twixt both your  
 humid lips,  
 My hair is fallen now : knot it again !  
*Seb.* I kiss you now, dear Ottima,  
 now and now !  
 This way ? Will you forgive me—be  
 once more  
 My great queen ?  
*Otti.* Bind it thrice about my brow ;  
 Crown me your queen, your spirit's  
 arbitress,  
 Magnificent in sin. Say that !  
*Seb.* I crown you  
 My great white queen, my spirit's arbi-  
 tress,  
 Magnificent . . .

[From without is heard the voice of Pina  
 singing—

*The year's at the spring  
 And day's at the morn ;  
 Morning's at seven ;  
 The hillside's dew-pearled ;  
 The lark's on the wing ;  
 The snail's on the thorn :  
 God's in his heaven—  
 All's right with the world !*

[PINA goes.

*Seb.* God's in his heaven ! Do you hear  
 that ? Who spoke ?  
 You, you spoke !  
*Otti.* Oh—that little ragged girl !  
 She must have rested on the step : we  
 give them  
 But this one holiday the whole year  
 round  
 Did you ever see our silk-mills—their  
 inside ?  
 There are ten silk-mills now belong to  
 you.  
 She stoops to pick my double heart-  
 ease . . . Sh !  
 She does not hear : call you out louder !  
*Seb.* Leave me !  
 Go, get your clothes on—dress those  
 shoulders !  
*Otti.* Sebald !  
*Seb.* Wipe off that paint ! I hate you.  
*Otti.* Miserable !  
*Seb.* My God, and she is emptied of it  
 now !  
 Outright now !—how miraculously gone  
 All of the grace—had she not strange  
 grace once ?  
 Why, the blank cheek hangs listless  
 as it likes,  
 No purpose holds the features up to-  
 gether,  
 Only the cloven brow and puckered chin  
 Stay in their places : and the very hair,  
 That seemed to have a sort of life in it,  
 Drops, a dead web !  
*Otti.* Speak to me—not of me !  
*Seb.*—That round great full-orbed face,  
 where not an angle  
 Broke 'the delicious indolence—all  
 broken !  
*Otti.* To me—not of me ! Ungrateful,  
 perjured cheat !  
 A coward too : but ingrate's worse than  
 all !  
 Beggar—my slave—a fawning, cringing  
 lie !  
 Leave me ! Betray me ! I can see your  
 drift !

ie that walks and eats and drinks !  
eb.

My God !  
se morbid olive faultless shoulder-  
blades—

ould have known there was no blood  
beneath !

tti. You hate me then ? You hate  
me then ?

eb. To think  
would succeed in her absurd attempt,  
I fascinate by sinning, show herself  
erior—guilt from its excess superior  
nnocence ! That little peasant's voice  
righted all again. Though I be lost,  
now which is the better, never fear,  
vice or virtue, purity or lust,  
sure or trick ! I see what I have done,  
irely now ! Oh I am proud to feel  
h torments—let the world take credit  
thence—

aving done my deed, pay too its  
price !

ate, hate—curse you ! God's in his  
heaven !

tti. —Me !

I no, no, Sebald, not yourself—kill  
me !

is the whole crime. Do but kill  
me—then

myself—then—presently—first hear  
me speak !

Iways meant to kill myself—wait,  
you !

n on my breast—not as a breast ;  
don't love me

more because you lean on me, my  
own

rt's Sebald ! There, there, both  
deaths presently !

eb. My brain is drowned now—quite  
drowned ; all I feel

. . . is, at swift-recurring intervals,  
urry-down within me, as of waters  
sened to smother up some ghastly  
pit :

re they go—whirls from a black  
fiery sea !

tti. Not me —to him, O God, be  
merciful !

: by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the  
side to Orcana. Foreign Students of paint-  
ing and sculpture, from Venice, assembled  
posite the house of JULES, a young French  
ituary, at Passagno.

t Student. Attention ! My own post is  
eath this window, but the pomegranate  
np yonder will hide three or four of you  
a little squeezing, and Schramm and  
pipe must lie flat in the balcony. Four,

five—who's a defaulter ? We want every-  
body, for Jules must not be suffered to  
hurt his bride when the jest's found out.

2d Stud. All here ! Only our poet's  
away—never having much meant to be  
present, moonstrike him ! The airs of that  
fellow, that Giovacchino ! He was in vio-  
lent love with himself, and had a fair pros-  
pect of thriving in his suit, so unmolested  
was it,—when suddenly a woman falls in  
love with him, too ; and out of pure jeal-  
ousy he takes himself off to Trieste, im-  
mortal poem and all : whereto is this  
prophetical epitaph appended already, as  
Bluphocks assures me,—“ *Here a mam-  
moth-poem lies, Fouled to death by but-  
terflies.*” His own fault, the simpleton !  
Instead of cramp couplets, each like a knife  
in your entrails, he should write, says  
Bluphocks, both classically and intelligibly.  
—*Æsculapius, an Epic. Catalogue of the  
drugs: Hebe's Plaster—One strip Cools  
your lip. Phœbus' emulsion—One bottle  
Clears your throttle. Mercury's bolus—  
One box Cures . . .*

3d Stud. Subside, my fine fellow ! If the  
marriage was over by ten o'clock, Jules will  
certainly be here in a minute with his bride.

2d Stud. Good !—only, so should the  
poet's muse have been universally accept-  
able, says Bluphocks, *et canibus nostris*  
. . . and Della not better known to our  
literary dogs than the boy Giovacchino !

1st Stud. To the point, now. Where's  
Gottlieb, the new-comer ? Oh,—listen, Gott-  
lieb, to what has called down this piece of  
friendly vengeance on Jules, of which we  
now assemble to witness the winding-up.  
We are all agreed, all in a tale, observe,  
when Jules shall burst out on us in a fury  
by and by ; I am spokesman—the verses  
that are to undeceive Jules bear my name  
of Lutwyche—but each professes himself  
alike insulted by this strutting stone-  
squarer, who came along from Paris to  
Munich, and thence with a crowd of us to  
Venice and Passagno here, but proceeds in  
a day or two alone again—oh, alone indu-  
bitably ! to Rome and Florence. He, for-  
sooth, take up his portion with these dis-  
solute, brutalized, heartless bunglers!—so he  
was heard to call us all. Now, is Schramm  
brutalized, I should like to know ? Am I  
heartless ?

Gottlieb. Why, somewhat heartless ; for,  
suppose Jules a coxcomb as much as you  
choose, still, for this mere coxcombry, you  
will have brushed off—what do folks style  
it?—the bloom of his life. It is too late to  
alter ? These love-letters, now, you call  
his—I can't laugh at them.

4th Stud. Because you never read the  
sham letters of our inditing which drew  
forth these.

Gott. His discovery of the truth will be  
frightful

4th Stud. That's the joke. But you should have joined us at the beginning: there's no doubt he loves the girl—loves a model he might hire by the hour!

Gott. See here! "He has been accustomed," he writes, "to have Canova's women about him, in stone, and the world's women beside him, in flesh; these being as much below, as those above, his soul's aspiration: but now he is to have the reality." There you laugh again! I say, you wipe off the very dew of his youth.

1st Stud. Schramm! (Take the pipe out of his mouth, somebody!) Will Jules lose the bloom of his youth?

Schramm. Nothing worth keeping is ever lost in this world: look at a blossom—it drops presently, having done its service and lasted its time; but fruits succeed, and where would be the blossom's place could it continue? As well affirm that your eye is no longer in your body, because its earliest favorite, whatever it may have first loved to look on, is dead and done with—as that any affection is lost to the soul when its first object, whatever happened first to satisfy it, is superseded in due course. Keep but ever looking, whether with the body's eye or the mind's, and you will soon find something to look on! Has a man done wondering at women?—there follow men, dead and alive, to wonder at. Has he done wondering at men?—there's God to wonder at: and the faculty of wonder may be, at the same time, old and tired enough with respect to its first object, and yet young and fresh sufficiently, so far as concerns its novel one. Thus . . .

1st Stud. Put Schramm's pipe into his mouth again! There, you see! Well, this Jules . . . a wretched fribble—oh, I watched his disportings at Possagno, the other day! Canova's gallery—you know; There he marches first resolutely past great works by the dozen without vouchsafing an eye: all at once he stops full at the *Psiche-fanciulla*—cannot pass that old acquaintance without a nod of encouragement—"In your new place, beauty? Then behave yourself as well here as at Munich—I see you!" Next he posts himself deliberately before the unfinished *Pietà* for half an hour without moving, till up he starts of a sudden, and thrusts his very nose into—I say, into—the group; by which gesture you are informed that precisely the sole point he had not fully mastered in Canova's practice was a certain method of using the drill in the articulation of the knee-joint—and that, likewise, has he mastered at length! Good-by, therefore, to poor Canova—whose gallery no longer needs detain his successor Jules, the predestinated novel thinker in marble!

5th Stud. Tell him about the women: go on to the women!

1st Stud. Why, on that matter he could never be supercilious enough. How should we be other (he said) than the poor devils, you see, with those debasing habits we cherish! He was not to wallow in that mire, at least: he would wait, and love only at the proper time, and meanwhile put up with the *Psiche-fanciulla*. Now, I happened to hear of a young Greek—real Greek girl at Malamocco: a true islander, do you see, with Alciphron's "hair like sea-moss"—Schramm knows!—white and quiet as an apparition, and fourteen years old at farthest,—a daughter of Natalia, so she swears—that hag Natalia, who helps us to models at three *lire* an hour. We selected this girl for the heroine of our jest. So, first, Jules received a scented letter—somebody had seen his Tydeus at the Academy, and my picture was nothing to it: a profound admirer bade him persevere—would make herself known to him ere long. (Paolina, my little friend of the *Fenice*, transcribes divinely.) And in due time, the mysterious correspondent gave certain hints of her peculiar charms—the pale cheeks, the black hair—whatever, in short, had struck us in our Malamocco model; we retained her name, too—Phene, which is, by interpretation, sea-eagle. Now, think of Jules finding himself distinguished from the herd of us by such a creature! In his very first answer he proposed marrying his mistress: and fancy us over these letters, two, three times a day, to receive and dispatch! I concocted the main of it: relations were in the way—secrecy must be observed in fine, would he wed her on trust, and only speak to her when they were indissolubly united? St—st—Here they come!

6th Stud. Both of them! Heaven's love, speak softly, speak within yourselves!

5th Stud. Look at the bridegroom! Half his hair in storm and half in calm,—patted down over the left temple,—like a frothy cup one blows on to cool it: and the same old blouse that he murders the marble in.

2d Stud. Not a rich vest like yours, Hannibal Scratchy!—rich, that your face may the better set it off.

6th Stud. And the bride! Yes, sure enough, our Phene! Should you have known her in her clothes? How magnificently pale.

Gott. She does not also take it for earnest, I hope?

1st Stud. Oh, Natalia's concern, that is. We settle with Natalia.

6th Stud. She does not speak—has evidently let out no word. The only thing is, will she equally remember the rest of her lesson, and repeat correctly all those verses which are to break the secret to Jules?

Gott. How he gazes on her! Pity—pity!

1st Stud. They go in; now, silence! You three,—not nearer the window, mind,

than that pomegranate; just where the little girl, who a few minutes ago passed us singing, is seated.

## II. NOON

*Over Orcana. The house of JULES, who crosses its threshold with PHENE: she is silent, on which JULES begins—*

Do not die, Phene! I am yours now,  
you  
Are mine now; let fate reach me how  
she likes,  
If you'll not die: so, never die! Sit  
here—  
My work-room's single seat. I over-  
lean  
This length of hair and lustrous front;  
they turn  
Like an entire flower upward: eyes,  
lips, last  
Your chin—no, last your throat turns:  
't is their scent  
Pulls down my face upon you. Nay,  
look ever  
This one way till I change, grow you—  
I could  
Change into you, beloved!

You by me,  
And I by you; this is your hand in mine,  
And side by side we sit: all's true.  
Thank God!  
I have spoken: speak you!

O my life to come!  
My Tydeus must be carved that's there  
in clay:  
Yet how be carved, with you about the  
room?  
Where must I place you? When I think  
that once  
This room-full of rough block-work  
seemed my heaven  
Without you! Shall I ever work again,  
(let fairly into my old ways again,  
Bid each conception stand while, trait  
by trait,  
My hand transfers its lineaments to  
stone?  
Will my mere fancies live near you,  
their truth—  
The live truth, passing and repassing  
me,  
Sitting beside me?

Now speak!  
Only first,  
See, all your letters! Was 't not well  
contrived?  
Their hiding-place is Psyche's robe; she  
keeps

Your letters next her skin: which drops  
out foremost?

Ah,—this that swam down like a first  
moonbeam  
Into my world!

Again those eyes complete  
Their melancholy survey, sweet and  
slow,

Of all my room holds; to return and  
rest

On me, with pity, yet some wonder too:  
As if God bade some spirit plague a  
world,

And this were the one moment of sur-  
And sorrow while she took her station,  
pausing

O'er what she sees, finds good, and must  
destroy!

What gaze you at? Those? Books, I  
told you of:

Let your first word to me rejoice them,  
too:

This minion, a Coluthus, writ in red.  
Bistre and azure by Bessarion's scribe—  
Read this line . . . no, shame—Homer's  
be the Greek

First breathed me from the lips of my  
Greek girl!

This Odyssey in coarse black vivid type  
With faded yellow blossoms 'twixt page  
and page,

To mark great places with due gratitude;  
"He said, and on Antinous directed  
A bitter shaft" . . . a flower blots out  
the rest!

Again upon your search? My statues,  
then!

—Ah, do not mind that—better that will  
look

When cast in bronze—an Almaign Kai-  
ser, that,

Swart-green and gold, with truncheon  
based on hip.

This, rather, turn to! What, unrecog-  
nized?

I thought you would have seen that here  
you sit

As I imagined you,—Hippolyta,  
Naked upon her bright Numidian horse.  
Recall you this then? "Carve in bold  
relief"—

So you commanded—"carve, against I  
come,

A Greek, in Athens, as our fashion was,  
Feasting, bay-filleted and thunder-free,  
Who rises 'neath the lifted myrtle-  
branch.

• Praise those who slew Hipparchus!'  
cry the guests,



' While o'er thy head the singer's myrtle waves  
 As erst above our champion : stand up,  
 all ! ' "

See, I have labored to express your thought.  
 Quite round, a cluster of mere hands and arms  
 (Thrust in all senses, all ways, from all sides,  
 Only consenting at the branch's end  
 They strain toward) serves for frame to a sole face,  
 The Praiser's, in the centre : who with eyes  
 Sightless, so bend they back to light inside  
 His brain where visionary forms throng  
 ' up,  
 Sings, minding not that palpitating arch  
 Of hands and arms, nor the quick drip of wine  
 From the drenched leaves o'erhead, nor crowns cast off,  
 Violet and parsley crowns to trample on—  
 Sings, pausing as the patron-ghosts approve,  
 Devoutly their unconquerable hymn.  
 But you must say a " well " to that—say " well ! "

Because you gaze — am I fantastic, sweet ?  
 Gaze like my very life's-stuff, marble—marbly  
 Even to the silence ! Why, before I found  
 The real flesh Phene, I inured myself  
 To see, throughout all nature, varied stuff  
 For better nature's birth by means of art :  
 With me, each substance tended to one form  
 Of beauty—to the human archetype.  
 On every side occurred suggestive germs  
 Of that—the tree, the flower—or take the fruit,—  
 Some rosy shape, continuing the peach,  
 Curved beewise o'er its bough ; as rosy limbs,  
 Depending, nestled in the leaves ; and just  
 From a cleft rose-peach the whole Dryad sprang.  
 But of the stuffs one can be master of,  
 How I divined their capabilities !  
 From the soft-rinded smoothening facile chalk [brace,  
 That yields your outline to the air's em-

Half-softened by a halo's pearly gloom ;  
 Down to the crisp imperious steel, so sure  
 To cut its one confided thought clean out  
 Of all the world. But marble !—neath my tools  
 More pliable than jelly—as it were  
 Some clear primordial creature dug from depths  
 In the earth's heart, where itself breeds itself,  
 And whence all baser substance may be worked ;  
 Refine it off to air, you may,—condense it  
 Down to the diamond ;—is not metal there,  
 When o'er the sudden speck my chisel trips ?  
 —Not flesh, as flake off flake I scale, approach,  
 Lay bare those bluish veins of blood asleep ?  
 Lurks flame in no strange windings where, surprised  
 By the swift implement sent home at once,  
 Flushes and glowings radiate and hover  
 About its track ?

Phene ? what—why is this ?  
 That whitening cheek, those still dilating eyes !  
 Ah, you will die—I knew that you would die !

*Phene begins, on his having long remained silent.*

*Phene.* Now the end's coming ; to be sure, it must  
 Have ended sometime ! Tush, why need I speak  
 Their foolish speech ? I cannot bring to mind  
 One half of it, beside ; and do not care  
 For old Natalia now, nor any of them.  
 Oh, you—what are you ?—if I do not try  
 To say the words Natalia made me learn, [self  
 To please your friends,—it is to keep my  
 Where your voice lifted me, by letting that  
 Proceed : but can it ? Even you, perhaps,  
 Cannot take up, now you have once let fall,  
 The music's life, and me along with that—  
 No, or you would ; We 'll stay, then, as we are :

Above the world.

You creature with the eyes!  
If I could look forever up to them,  
As now you let me,—I believe, all sin,  
All memory of wrong done, suffering  
borne,  
Would drop down, low and lower, to the  
earth  
Whence all that's low comes, and there  
touch and stay  
—Never to overtake the rest of me,  
All that, unspotted, reaches up to you,  
Drawn by those eyes! What rises is  
myself,  
Not me the shame and suffering; but  
they sink,  
Are left, I rise above them. Keep me  
so,

Above the world!

But you sink, for your eyes  
Are altering—altered! Stay—"I love  
you, love"....  
I could prevent it if I understood:  
More of your words to me: was 't in the  
tone

Or the words, your power?

Or stay—I will repeat  
Their speech, if that contents you!  
Only change

No more, and I shall find it presently  
Far back here, in the brain yourself  
filled up.

Natalia threatened me that harm should  
follow

Unless I spoke their lesson to the end,  
But harm to me, I thought she meant,  
not you.

Your friends,—Natalia said they were  
your friends

And meant you well, — because, I  
doubted it,

Observing (what was very strange to  
see)

On every face, so different in all else,  
The same smile girls like me are used to  
bear,

But never men, men cannot stoop so low;  
Yet your friends, speaking of you, used  
that smile,

That hateful smirk of boundless self-  
conceit

Which seems to take possession of the  
world

And make of God a tame confederate,  
Purveyor to their appetites.....you  
know!

But still Natalia said they were your  
friends, [the more,

And they assented though they smiled

And all came round me,—that thin Eng-  
lishman

With light lank hair seemed leader of  
the rest;

He held a paper—"What we want,"  
said he,

Ending some explanation to his friends—  
"Is something slow, involved and mys-  
tical,

To hold Jules long in doubt, yet take his  
taste

And lure him on until, at innermost  
Where he seeks sweetness' soul, he may  
find—this!

—As in the apple's core, the noisome fly:  
For insects on the rind are seen at once,  
And brushed aside as soon, but this is  
found

Only when on the lips or loathing  
tongue."

And so he read what I have got by heart:  
I'll speak it,—“Do not die, love! I am  
yours”....

No—is not that, or like that, part of  
words

Yourself began by speaking? Strange to  
lose

What cost such pains to learn! Is this  
more right?

*I am a painter who cannot paint;  
In my life, a devil rather than saint;  
In my brain, as poor a creature too:  
No end to all I cannot do!*

*Yet do one thing at least I can—  
Love a man or hate a man  
Supremely: thus my love began.  
Through the Valley of Love I went,  
In the loveliest spot to abide.  
And just on the verge where I pitched my  
tent,*

*I found Hate dwelling beside.  
(Let the Bridegroom ask what the painter  
meant,*

*Of his Bride, of the peerless Bride!)  
And further, I traversed Hate's grove,  
In the hatefullest nook to dwell;  
But lo, where I flung myself prone,  
couched Love*

*Where the shadows threefold fell.  
(The meaning—those black bride's-eyes  
above,*

*Not a painter's lip should tell!)*

"And here," said he, "Jules probably  
will ask,

'You have black eyes, Love,—you are,  
sure enough, [deed

My peerless bride,—then do you tell in-

What needs some explanation! What means this?"

—And I am to go on, without a word—

*So, I grew wise in Love and Hate,  
From simple that I was of late.  
Once, when I loved, I would enlase  
Breast, eyelids, hands, feet, form and  
face*

*Of her I loved, in one embrace—  
As if by mere love I could love immense-  
ly!*

*Once, when I hated, I would plunge  
My sword, and wipe with the first lunge  
My foe's whole life out like a sponge—  
As if by mere hate I could hate intensely!  
But now I am wiser, know better the  
fashion*

*How passion seeks aid from its opposite  
passion:*

*And if I see cause to love more, hate  
more*

*Than ever man loved, ever hated before—*

*And seek in the Valley of Love*

*The nest, or the nook in Hate's Grove*

*Where my soul may surely reach*

*The essence, naught less, of each,*

*The Hate of all Hates, the Love*

*Of all Loves, in the Valley or Grove,—*

*I find them the very warders*

*Each of the other's borders.*

*When I love most, Love is disguised*

*In Hate; and when Hate is surprised*

*In Love, then I hate most: ask*

*How Love smiles through Hate's iron*

*Hate grins through Love's rose-braided*

*mask,—*

*And how, having hated thee,*

*I sought long and painfully*

*To reach thy heart, nor prick*

*The skin but pierce to the quick—*

*Ask this, my Jules, and be answered  
straight*

*By thy bride—how the painter Lutwyche  
can hate!*

JULES interposes.

Lutwyche! Who else? But all of them, no doubt,

Hated me: they at Venice—presently

Their turn, however! You I shall not meet:

If I dreamed, saying this would wake me.

Keep

What's here, the gold—we cannot meet again,

Consider. and the money was but meant  
For two years' travel, which is over now.  
All chance or hope or care or need of it.  
This—and what comes from selling these,  
my casts

And books and medals, except . . . let them go

Together, so the produce keeps you safe  
Out of Natalia's clutches! If by chance  
(For all's chance here) I should survive  
the gang

At Venice, root out all fifteen of them,  
We might meet somewhere, since the  
world is wide.

*From without is heard the voice of PIPPA, sing-  
ing—*

*Give her but a least excuse to love me!  
When—where—*

*How—can this arm establish her above  
me,*

*If fortune fixed her as my lady there.*

*There already, to eternally reprove me!*

*("Hist!"—said Kate the Queen;*

*But "Oh!" cried the maiden, binding  
her tresses,*

*"'T is only a page that carols unseen.  
Crumbling your hounds their messes!")*

*Is she wronged?—To the rescue of her  
honor,*

*My heart!*

*Is she poor?—What costs it to be styled  
a donor?*

*Merely an earth to cleave, a sea to part.  
But that fortune should have thrust  
all this upon her!*

*("Nay, list!"—bade Kate the Queen:*

*And still cried the maiden, binding her  
tresses,*

*"'T is only a page that carols unseen.  
Fitting your hawks their jesses!")*

PIPPA pauses.

JULES resumes.

What name was that the little girl sang forth?

Kate? The Cornaro, doubtless, who re-nounced

The crown of Cyprus to be lady here

At Asolo, where still her memory stays.

And peasants sing how once a certain  
page

Pined for the grace of her so far above

His power of doing good to, "Kate the  
Queen—

She never could be wronged, be poor,"  
he sighed,

"Need him to help her!"

Yes, a bitter thing  
To see our lady above all need of us ;  
Yet so we look ere we will love ; not I,  
But the world looks so. If whoever  
loves  
Must be, in some sort, god or worship-  
per,  
The blessing or the blest one, queen or  
page,  
Why should we always choose the page's  
part ?  
Here is a woman with utter need of  
me,—  
I find myself queen here, it seems !  
How strange !  
Look at the woman here with the new  
soul,  
Like my own Psyche,—fresh upon her  
lips  
Alit, the visionary butterfly,  
Waiting my word to enter and make  
bright,  
Or flutter off and leave all blank as first.  
This body had no soul before, but slept  
Or stirred, was beauteous or ungainly,  
free  
From taint or foul with stain, as outward  
things  
Fastened their image on its passiveness :  
Now it will wake, feel, live—or die again !  
Shall to produce form out of unshaped  
stuff  
Be Art—and further, to evoke a soul  
From form be nothing ? This new soul is  
mine !

Now, to kill Lutwyche, what would that  
do ?—save  
A wretched dauber, men will hoot to  
death  
Without me, from their hooting. Oh,  
to hear  
God's voice plain as I heard it first, be-  
fore  
They broke in with their laughter ! I  
heard them  
Henceforth, not God.

To Ancona—Greece—some isle !  
I wanted silence only ; there is clay  
Everywhere. One may do whate'er one  
likes

In Art : the only thing is, to make sure  
That one does like it—which takes pains  
to know.

Scatter all this, my Phene—this mad  
dream !

Who, what is Lutwyche, what Natalia's  
friends, [my own,

What the whole world except our love—

Own Phene ? But I told you, did I not.  
Ere night we travel for your land—some  
isle

With the sea's silence on it ? Stand aside—  
I do but break these paltry models up  
To begin Art afresh. Meet Lutwyche,  
I— [him ?

And save him from my statue meeting  
Some unsuspected isle in the far seas !  
Like a god going through his world,  
there stands

One mountain for a moment in the dusk,  
Whole brotherhoods of cedars on its  
brow :

And you are ever by me while I gaze  
—Are in my arms as now—as now—as  
now !

Some unsuspected isle in the far seas !  
Some unsuspected isle in far-off seas !

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from Or-  
cana to the Turret. Two or three of the Aus-  
trian Police loitering with BLUPHOCKS, an  
English vagabond, just in view of the Turret.*

*Bluphocks.* So, that is your Pippa, the  
little girl who passed us singing ? Well,  
your Bishop's Intendant's money shall be  
honestly earned :—now, don't make me  
that sour face because I bring the Bishop's  
name into the business ; we know he can  
have nothing to do with such horrors : we  
know that he is a saint and all that a bishop  
should be, who is a great man beside. *Oh  
were but every worm a maggot, Every fly  
a grig, Every bough a Christmas fagot,  
Every tune a jig !* In fact, I have abjured  
all religions : but the last I inclined to was  
the Armenian : for I have travelled, do you  
see, and at Koenigsberg, Prussia Improper  
(so styled because there's a sort of bleak  
hungry sun there), you might remark, over  
a venerable house-porch, a certain Chaldee  
inscription ; and brief as it is, a mere  
glance at it used absolutely to change the  
mood of every bearded passenger. In they  
turned, one and all ; the young and light-  
some, with no irreverent pause, the aged  
and decrepit, with a sensible alacrity :  
'twas the Grand Rabbi's abode, in short.  
Struck with curiosity, I lost no time in  
learning Syriac—(these are vowels, you dogs  
—follow my stick's end in the mud—*Celar-  
ent, Daril, Ferio !*) and one morning pre-  
sented myself, spelling-book in hand, a, b,  
c,—I picked it out letter by letter, and what  
was the purport of this miraculous posy ?  
Some cherished legend of the past, you'll  
say—“*How Moses hocuspocussed Egypt's  
land with fly and locust,*”—or “*How to  
Jonah sounded harshish, Get thee up and  
go to Tarshish,*”—or “*How the angel  
meeting Balaam, Straiht his ass returned  
a salaam.*” In no wise ! “*Shackabrack—  
Boach—somebody or other—Isaach, Re-*

*cel-ver, Pur-cha-ser and Ex-chan-ger of—Stolen Goods!*" So talk to me of the religion of a bishop! I have renounced all bishops save Bishop Beveridge!—mean to live so—and die—*As some Greek dog-sage dead and merry, Hellward bound in Charon's wherry, With food for both worlds, under and upper, Lupine-seed and Hecate's supper, And never an obolus.* . . (though thanks to you, or this Intendant—through you, or this Bishop through his Intendant—I possess a burning pocket-full of *zwanzigers*) . . . *To pay the Stygian Ferry!*

*1st Policeman.* There is the girl, then; go and deserve them the moment you have pointed out to us Signor Luigi and his mother. [*To the rest.*] I have been noticing a house yonder, this long while: not a shutter unclosed since morning!

*2d Pol.* Old Luca Gaddi's, that owns the silk-mills here: he dozes by the hour, wakes up, sighs deeply, says he should like to be Prince Metternich, and then dozes again, after having bidden young Sebald, the foreigner, set his wife to playing draughts. Never molested such a household, they mean well.

*Blup.* Only, cannot you tell me something of this little Pippa, I must have to do with? One could make something of that name. Pippa—that is, short for Felippa—rhyming to *Panurge consults Hertrip-pa—Believest thou King Agrippa?* Something might be done with that name.

*2d Pol.* Put into rhyme that your head and a ripe muskmelon would not be dear at half a *zwanziger*! Leave this fooling, and look out; the afternoon's over or nearly so.

*3d Pol.* Where in this passport of Signor Luigi does our Principal instruct you to watch him so narrowly? There? What's there beside a simple signature? (That English fool's busy watching.)

*2d Pol.* Flourish all round—"Put all possible obstacles in his way;" oblong dot at the end—"Detain him till further advices reach you;" scratch at bottom—"Send him back on pretence of some informality in the above;" ink-spirt on right hand side (which is the case here)—"Arrest him at once." Why and wherefore. I don't concern myself, but my instructions amount to this: if Signor Luigi leaves home to-night for Vienna—well and good, the passport deposited with us for our *visa* is really for his own use, they have misinformed the Office, and he means well; but let him stay over to-night—there has been the pretence we suspect, the accounts of his corresponding and holding intelligence with the Carbonari are correct, we arrest him at once, to-morrow comes Venice, and presently Spielberg. Bluphocks makes the signal, sure enough! That is he, entering the turret with his mother, no doubt.

### III. EVENING

*Inside the Turret on the Hill above Asolo. LUCI and his MOTHER entering.*

*Mother.* If there blew wind, you'd hear a long sigh, easing  
The utmost heaviness of music's heart.

*Luigi.* Here in the archway?

*Mother.* Oh no, no—in farther,  
Where the echo is made, on the ridge.

*Luigi.* Here surely, then.  
How plain the tap of my heel as I leaped up!

Hark—"Lucius Junius!" The very  
ghost of a voice

Whose body is caught and kept by . . .  
what are those?

Mere withered wallflowers, waving over-  
head?

They seem an elvish group with thin  
bleached hair

That lean out of their topmost fortress—  
look

And listen, mountain men, to what we  
say,

Hand under chin of each grave earthy  
face.

Up and show faces all of you!—"All of  
you!"

That's the king dwarf with the scarlet  
comb; old Franz,

Come down and meet your fate? Hark—  
"Meet your fate!"

*Mother.* Let him not meet it, my  
Luigi—do not

Go to his City! Putting crime aside.  
Half of these ills of Italy are feigned:

Your Pellicos and writers for effect,  
Write for effect.

*Luigi.* Hush! Say A writes, and B.

*Mother.* These A's and B's write for  
effect, I say.

Then, evil is in its nature loud, while  
good

Is silent; you hear each petty injury.

None of his virtues; he is old beside.

Quiet and kind, and densely stupid.

Why

Do A and B kill not him themselves?

*Luigi.* They teach

Others to kill him—me—and, if I fail,

Others to succeed; now, if A tried and

failed,

I could not teach that: mine's the lesser

task.

*Mother.* they visit night by night . . .

*Mother.* —You, Luigi?

Ah, will you let me tell you what you

are?

Why not? Oh, the one thing  
 you fear to hint,  
 I assure yourself I say and say  
 myself! At times—nay, even  
 now  
 —I think my mind is touch'd,  
 suspect  
 not sound: but is not knowing  
 what,  
 constitutes one sane or otherwise?  
 I am thus—so, all is right again.  
 at myself as through the town I  
 walk,  
 men merry as if no Italy  
 offering: then I ponder—"I am  
 ch,  
 healthy; why should this fact  
 trouble me,  
 can it troubles these?" But it  
 does trouble.  
 able 's a bad word: for as I walk  
 springing and melody and giddi-  
 ness,  
 d quaint turns and passages of  
 my youth,  
 long forgotten, little in them-  
 selves,  
 to me—whatever may amuse me:  
 'th seems in a truce with me, and  
 heaven  
 with me, all things suspend  
 their strife.  
 y cicala laughs "There goes he,  
 and there!  
 him, the time is short; he is on  
 his way  
 world's sake: feast him this once,  
 my friend!"  
 return for all this, I can trip  
 lightly up the scaffold-steps. I go  
 saying, mother!  
 "r. But mistrust yourself—  
 t the judgment you pronounce  
 on him!  
 . Oh, there I feel—am sure that  
 am right!  
 r. Mistrust your judgment then,  
 f the mere means  
 wild enterprise: say, you are  
 ght,—  
 ould one in your state e'er bring  
 to pass  
 ould require a cool head, a cool  
 heart,  
 calm hand? You never will es-  
 cape.  
 . Escape? To even wish that,  
 ould spoil all.  
 ng is best part of it. Too much

Have I enjoyed these fifteen years of  
 mine,  
 To leave myself excuse for longer life:  
 Was not life pressed down, running o'er  
 with joy,  
 That I might finish with it ere my  
 fellows  
 Who, sparerlier feasted, make a longer  
 stay?  
 I was put at the board-head, helped to  
 all  
 At first; I rise up happy and content.  
 God must be glad one loves his world so  
 much.  
 I can give news of earth to all the dead  
 Who ask me:—last year's sunsets, and  
 great stars  
 Which had a right to come first and see  
 ebb  
 The crimson wave that drifts the sun  
 away—  
 Those crescent moons with notched and  
 burning rims  
 That strengthened into sharp fire, and  
 there stood,  
 Impatient of the azure—and that day  
 In March, a double rainbow stopped the  
 storm—  
 May's warm slow yellow moonlit summer  
 nights—  
 Gone are they, but I have them in my  
 soul!  
*Mother.* (He will not go!)  
*Luigi.* You smile at me? 'T is true,—  
 Voluptuousness, grotesqueness, ghastli-  
 ness,  
 Environ my devotedness as quaintly  
 As round about some antique altar  
 wreath  
 The rose festoons, goats' horns, and  
 oxen's skulls.  
*Mother.* See now: you reach the city,  
 you must cross  
 His threshold—how?  
*Luigi.* Oh, that's if we conspired!  
 Then would come pains in plenty, as  
 you guess—  
 But guess not how the qualities most fit  
 For such an office, qualities I have,  
 Would little stead me, otherwise em-  
 ployed,  
 Yet prove of rarest merit only here.  
 Every one knows for what his excellence  
 Will serve, but no one ever will consider  
 For what his worst defect might serve:  
 and yet  
 Have you not seen me range our coppice  
 yonder  
 In search of a distorted ash?—I find

The wry spoilt branch a natural perfect bow.

Fancy the thrice-sage, thrice-precautioned man

Arriving at the palace on my errand !

No, no ! I have a handsome dress packed up—

White satin here, to set off my black hair ;

In I shall march—for you may watch your life out

Behind thick walls, make friends there to betray you ;

More than one man spoils everything. March straight—

Only, no clumsy knife to fumble for, Take the great gate, and walk (not saunter) on

Through guards and guards—I have rehearsed it all

Inside the turret here a hundred times. Don't ask the way of whom you meet, observe !

But where they cluster thickliest is the door

Of doors ; they'll let you pass—they'll never blab

Each to the other, he knows not the favorite,

Whence he is bound and what's his business now.

Walk in—straight up to him ; you have no knife :

Be prompt, how should he scream ? Then out with you !

Italy, Italy, my Italy !

You're free, you're free ! Oh mother, I could dream

They got about me—Andrea from his exile,

Pier from his dungeon, Gualtier from his grave !

*Mother.* Well, you shall go. Yet seems this patriotism

The easiest virtue for a selfish man To acquire : he loves himself—and next, the world—

If he must love beyond,—but naught between : [way

As a short-sighted man sees naught mid-His body and the sun above. But you

Are my adored Luigi, ever obedient To my least wish, and running o'er with love :

I could not call you cruel or unkind. Once more, your ground for killing him !

—then go !

*Luigi.* Now do you try me, or make sport of me ?

How first the Austrians got these provinces . . .

(If that is all, I'll satisfy you soon)

—Never by conquest but by cunning, for That treaty whereby . . .

*Mother.* Well !

*Luigi.* (Sure, he's arrived. The tell-tale cuckoo : spring's his confident,

And he lets out her April purposes !) Or . . . better go at once to modern time.

He has . . . they have . . . in fact, I understand

But can't restate the matter : that's my boast :

Others could reason it out to you, and prove

Things they have made me feel.

*Mother.* Why go to-night !

Morn's for adventure. Jupiter is now A morning-star. I cannot hear you,

*Luigi !*

*Luigi.* " I am the bright and morning-star," saith God—

And " to such an one I give the morning-star."

The gift of the morning-star ! Have I God's gift

Of the morning-star ?

*Mother.* Chiara will love to see That Jupiter an evening-star next June.

*Luigi.* True, mother. Well for those who live through June !

Great noontides, thunder-storms, all glaring pomps

That triumph at the heels of June the god

Leading his revel through our leafy world.

Yes, Chiara will be here.

*Mother.* In June : remember. Yourself appointed that month for her coming.

*Luigi.* Was that low noise the echo ?

*Mother.* The night wind. She must be grown—with her blue eyes upturned

As if life were one long and sweet surprise :

In June she comes.

*Luigi.* We were to see together The Titian at Treviso. There, again !

[From without is heard the voice of PUPP singing—

*A king lived long ago,*

*In the morning of the world,*

*When earth was nigher heaven than now ;*

*And the king's locks curled,  
Disparting o'er a forehead full  
As the milk-white space 'twixt horn and  
horn  
Of some sacrificial bull—  
Only calm as a babe new-born:  
For he was got to a sleepy mood,  
So safe from all decrepitude,  
Age with its bane, so sure gone by,  
(The gods so loved him while he dreamed)  
That, having lived thus long, there seemed  
No need the king should ever die.*

*Luigi.* No need that sort of king should  
ever die!

*Among the rocks his city was:  
Before his palace, in the sun,  
He sat to see his people pass,  
And judge them every one  
From its threshold of smooth stone.  
They haled him many a valley-thief  
Caught in the sheep-pens, robber-chief  
Swarthy and shameless, beggar-cheat,  
Spy-prowler, or rough pirate found  
On the sea-sand left aground;  
And sometimes clung about his feet,  
With bleeding lip and burning cheek,  
A woman, bitterest wrong to speak  
Of one with sullen thickset brows:  
And sometimes from the prison-house  
The angry priests a pale wretch  
brought,  
Who through some chink had pushed  
and pressed  
On knees and elbows, belly and breast,  
Worm-like into the temple,—caught  
He was by the very god,  
Who ever in the darkness strode  
Backward and forward, keeping watch  
O'er his brazen bowels, such rogues to  
catch!  
These, all and every one,  
The king judged, sitting in the sun.*

*Luigi.* That king should still judge,  
sitting in the sun!

*His councillors, on left and right,  
Looked anxious up,—but no surprise  
Disturbed the king's old smiling eyes  
Where the very blue had turned to  
white.  
'T is said, a Python scared one day  
The breathless city, till he came,  
With forked tongue and eyes on flame,  
Where the old king sat to judge away;  
But when he saw the sleepy hair  
Girt with a crown of berries rare  
Which the god will hardly give to wear*

*To the maiden who singeth, dancing  
bare  
In the altar-smoke by the pine-torch  
lights,  
At his wondrous forest rites,—  
Seeing this he did not dare  
Approach that threshold in the sun,  
Assault the old king smiling there.  
Such grace had kings when the world  
began!*

*PIPPA passes.*

*Luigi.* And such grace have they,  
now that the world ends!  
The Python at the city, on the throne,  
And brave men. God would crown for  
slaying him,  
Lurk in by-corners lest they fall his  
prey.  
Are crowns yet to be won in this late  
time  
Which weakness makes me hesitate to  
reach?  
'T is God's voice calls: how could I stay?  
Farewell!

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the  
Turret to the Bishop's Brother's House, close  
to the Duomo S. Maria. Poor GIRLS sitting on  
the steps.*

*1st Girl.* There goes a swallow to  
Venice—the stout seafarer!  
Seeing those birds fly, makes one wish  
for wings.

Let us all wish; you, wish first!

*2d Girl.* I? This sunset  
To finish.

*3d Girl.* That old — somebody I  
know,

Grayer and older than my grandfather,  
To give me the same treat he gave last  
week—

Feeding me on his knee with fig-  
peckers,

Lampreys and red Breganze-wine, and  
mumbling

The while some folly about how well I  
fare,

Let sit and eat my supper quietly:

Since had he not himself been late this  
morning

Detained at—never mind where,—had  
he not . . .

“Eh, baggage, had I not!”—

*2d Girl.* How she can lie!

*3d Girl.* Look there—by the nails!

*2d Girl.* What makes your fingers  
red?

*3d Girl.* Dipping them into wine to  
write bad words with



On the bright table : how he laughed !

*1st Girl.* My turn.  
Spring 's come and summer 's coming.  
I would wear

A long loose gown, down to the feet and hands,

With plaits here, close about the throat,  
all day ;

And all night lie, the cool long nights  
in bed ;

And have new milk to drink, apples to eat,

Deuzans and junetings, leather-coats . . .  
ah, I should say,

This is away in the fields—miles !

*3d Girl.* Say at once  
You 'd be at home : she 'd always be at home !

Now comes the story of the farm among  
The cherry orchards, and how April  
snowed

White blossoms on her as she ran.  
Why, fool,

They 've rubbed the chalk-mark out,  
how tall you were,

Twisted your starling's neck, broken  
his cage,

Made a dung-hill of your garden !

*1st Girl.* They destroy  
My garden since I left them? well—  
perhaps

I would have done so : so I hope they  
have !

A fig-tree curled out of our cottage  
wall ;

They called it mine, I have forgotten  
why.

It must have been there long ere I was  
born :

*Cric—cric*—I think I hear the wasps  
o'erhead

Pricking the papers strung to flutter  
there

And keep off birds in fruit-time—coarse  
long papers,

And the wasps eat them, prick them  
through and through.

*3d Girl.*—How her mouth twitches !  
Where was I?—before

She broke in with her wishes and long  
gowns

And wasps—would I be such a fool!—  
Oh, here !

This is my way : I answer every one  
Who asks me why I make so much of  
him—

(If you say "you love him"—straight  
"he 'll not be gulled!")

"He that seduced me when I was a girl

Thus high—had eyes like yours, or hair  
like yours,

Brown, red, white,"—as the case may  
be : that pleases.

See how that beetle burnishes in the  
path !

There sparkles he along the dust : and  
there—

Your journey to that maize tuft spoiled  
at least !

*1st Girl.* When I was young, they  
said if you killed one

Of those sunshiny beetles, that his friend  
Up there, would shine no more that day

nor next.

*2d Girl.* When you were young? nor  
are you young, that 's true.

How your plump arms, that were, have  
dropped away !

Why, I can span them. Cecco beats  
you still?

No matter, so you keep your curious  
hair.

I wish they 'd find a way to dye our  
Your color—any lighter tint, indeed

Than black : the men say they are sick  
of black,

Black eyes, black hair !

*4th Girl.* Sick of yours, like enough.  
Do you pretend you ever tasted lam-

preys

And ortolans? Giovita, of the palace,  
Engaged (but there's no trusting him)

to slice me

Polenta with a knife that had cut up  
An ortolan.

*2d Girl.* Why, there! Is not that  
Pippa

We are to talk to, under the window,—  
quick !—

Where the lights are?

*1st Girl.* That she? No, or she would  
sing,

For the Intendant said . . .

*3d Girl.* Oh, you sing first!  
Then, if she listens and comes close . . .

I 'll tell you,—

Sing that song the young English noble  
made,

Who took you for the purest of the pure,  
And meant to leave the world for you—  
what fun !

*2d Girl.* [Sings.]

*You 'll love me yet!—and I can tarry*

*Your love's protracted growing:*

*June reared that bunch of flowers you*  
*carry.*

*From seeds of April's sowing.*

*I plant a heartfull now : some seed  
At least is sure to strike,  
And yield—what you'll not pluck indeed,  
Not love, but, may be, like.*

*You'll look at least on love's remains,  
A grave's one violet :  
Your look ?—that pays a thousand pains.  
What's death ? You'll love me yet !*

3d Girl. [To PIPPA who approaches.]  
Oh, you may come closer—we shall not eat you ! Why, you seem the very person that the great rich handsome Englishman has fallen so violently in love with. I'll tell you all about it.

#### IV. NIGHT

*Inside the Palace by the Duomo. MONSIGNOR,  
dismissing his Attendants.*

MONSIGNOR. Thanks, friends, many thanks ! I chiefly desire life now, that I may recompense every one of you. Most I know something of already. What, a repast prepared ? *Benedicto benedicatur* . . . ugh, ugh ! Where was I ? Oh, as you were remarking, Ugo, the weather is mild, very unlike winter-weather : but I am a Sicilian, you know, and shiver in your Julys here. To be sure, when 't was full summer at Messina, as we priests used to cross in procession the great square on Assumption Day, you might see our thickest yellow tapers twist suddenly in two, each like a falling star, or sink down on themselves in a gore of wax. But go, my friends, but go ! [To the Intendant.] Not you, Ugo ! [The others leave the apartment.] I have long wanted to converse with you, Ugo.

Intendant. Uguccio—

Mon. . . . 'guccio Stefani, man ! of Ascoli, Fermo and Fossombruno ;—what I do need instructing about, are these accounts of your administration of my poor brother's affairs. Ugh ! I shall never get through a third part of your accounts ; take some of these dainties before we attempt it, however. Are you bashful to that degree ? For me, a crust and water suffice.

Inten. Do you choose this especial night to question me ?

Mon. This night, Ugo. You have managed my late brother's affairs since the death of our elder brother : fourteen years and a month, all but three days. On the Third of December, I find him . . .

Inten. If you have so intimate an acquaintance with your brother's affairs, you will be tender of turning so far back : they will hardly bear looking into, so far back.

Mon. Ay, ay, ugh, ugh,—nothing but disappointments here below ! I remarked a considerable payment made to yourself

on this Third of December. Talk of disappointments ! There was a young fellow here, Jules, a foreign sculptor I did my utmost to advance, that the Church might be a gainer by us both : he was going on hopefully enough, and of a sudden he notifies to me some marvellous change that has happened in his notions of Art. Here's his letter,—“He never had a clearly conceived Ideal within his brain till to-day. Yet since his hand could manage a chisel, he has practised expressing other men's Ideals ; and, in the very perfection he has attained to, he foresees an ultimate failure : his unconscious hand will pursue its prescribed course of old years, and will reproduce with a fatal expertness the ancient types, let the novel one appear never so palpably to his spirit. There is but one method of escape : confiding the virgin type to as chaste a hand, he will turn painter instead of sculptor, and paint, not carve, its characteristics,”—strike out, I dare say, a school like Correggio : how think you, Ugo ?

Inten. Is Correggio a painter ?

Mon. Foolish Jules ! and yet, after all, why foolish ? He may—probably will—fail egregiously ; but if there should arise a new painter, will it not be in some such way, by a poet now, or a musician (spirits who have conceived and perfected an Ideal through some other channel), transferring it to this, and escaping our conventional roads by pure ignorance of them ; eh, Ugo ? If you have no appetite, talk at least, Ugo ?

Inten. Sir, I can submit no longer to this course of yours. First, you select the group of which I formed one,—next you thin it gradually,—always retaining me with your smile,—and so do you proceed till you have fairly got me alone with you between four stone walls. And now then ? Let this farce, this chatter end now : what is it you want with me ?

Mon. Ugo !

Inten. From the instant you arrived, I felt your smile on me as you questioned me about this and the other article in those papers—why your brother should have given me this villa, that *podere*,—and your nod at the end meant,—what ?

Mon. Possibly that I wished for no loud talk here. If once you set me coughing, Ugo !—

Inten. I have your brother's hand and seal to all I possess : now ask me what for ! what service I did him—ask me !

Mon. I would better not : I should rip up old disgraces, let out my poor brother's weaknesses. By the way, Maffeo of Forlì, (which, I forgot to observe, is your true name,) was the interdict ever taken off you for robbing that church at Cesena ?

Inten. No, nor needs be : for when I murdered your brother's friend, Pasquale, for him . . .

*Mon.* Ah, he employed you in that business, did he? Well, I must let you keep, as you say, this villa and that *podere*, for fear the world should find out my relations were of so indifferent a stamp? Maffeo, my family is the oldest in Messina, and century after century have my progenitors gone on polluting themselves with every wickedness under heaven: my own father . . . rest his soul!—I have, I know, a chapel to support that it may rest: my dear two dead brothers were,—what you know tolerably well; I, the youngest, might have rivalled them in vice, if not in wealth: but from my boyhood I came out from among them, and so am not partaker of their plagues. My glory springs from another source; or if from this, by contrast only,—for I, the bishop, am the brother of your employers, Ugo. I hope to repair some of their wrong, however; so far as my brother's ill-gotten treasure reverts to me, I can stop the consequences of his crime; and not one *soldo* shall escape me. Maffeo, the sword we quiet men spurn away, you shrewd knaves pick up and commit murders with; what opportunities the virtuous forego, the villainous seize. Because, to pleasure myself apart from other considerations, my food would be millet-cake, my dress sack-cloth, and my couch straw,—am I therefore to let you, the off-scouring of the earth, seduce the poor and ignorant by appropriating a pomp these will be sure to think lessens the abominations so unaccountably and exclusively associated with it? Must I let villas and *poderi* go to you, a murderer and thief, that you may beget by means of them other murderers and thieves? No—! if my cough would but allow me to speak!

*Inten.* What am I to expect? You are going to punish me?

*Mon.* Must punish you, Maffeo. I cannot afford to cast away a chance. I have whole centuries of sin to redeem, and only a month or two of life to do it in. How should I dare to say . . .

*Inten.* "Forgive us our trespasses"?

*Mon.* My friend, it is because I avow myself a very worm, sinful beyond measure, that I reject a line of conduct you would applaud perhaps. Shall I proceed, as it were, a-pardoning?—I?—who have no symptom of reason to assume that aught less than my strenuous efforts will keep myself out of mortal sin, much less keep others out. No: I do trespass, but will not double that by allowing you to trespass.

*Inten.* And suppose the villas are not your brother's to give, nor yours to take? Oh, you are hasty enough just now!

*Mon.* 1, 2—No 3!—ay, can you read the substance of a letter, No 3, I have received from Rome? It is precisely on the ground there mentioned, of the suspicion I have that a certain child of my late elder brother,

who would have succeeded to his estates, was murdered in infancy by you, Maffeo, at the instigation of my late younger brother—that the Pontiff enjoins on me not merely the bringing that Maffeo to condign punishment, but the taking all pains, as guardian of the infant's heritage for the Church, to recover it parcel by parcel, howsoever, whensoever, and wheresoever. While you are now gnawing those fingers, the police are engaged in sealing up your papers, Maffeo, and the mere raising my voice brings my people from the next room to dispose of yourself. But I want you to confess quietly, and save me raising my voice. Why, man, do I not know the old story? The heir between the succeeding heir, and this heir's ruffianly instrument, and their complot's effect, and the life of fear and bribes and ominous smiling silence? Did you throttle or stab my brother's infant? Come now!

*Inten.* So old a story, and tell it no better? When did such an instrument ever produce such an effect? Either the child smiles in his face: or, most likely, he is not fool enough to put himself in the employer's power so thoroughly: the child is always ready to produce—as you say—howsoever, wheresoever, and whensoever.

*Mon.* Liar!

*Inten.* Strike me? Ah, so might a father chastise! I shall sleep soundly to-night at least, though the gallows await me to-morrow; for what a life did I lead! Carlo of Cesena reminds me of his connivance, every time I pay his annuity; which happens commonly thrice a year. If I remonstrate, he will confess all to the good bishop—you!

*Mon.* I see through the trick, caitiff! I would you spoke truth for once. All shall be sifted, however—seven times sifted.

*Inten.* And how my absurd riches encumbered me! I dared not lay claim to above half of my possessions. Let me but once unbosom myself, glorify Heaven, and die!

Sir, you are no brutal dastardly idiot like your brother I frightened to death: let us understand one another. Sir, I will make away with her for you—the girl—here close at hand; not the stupid obvious kind of killing; do not speak—know nothing of her nor of me! I see her every day—saw her this morning: of course there is to be no killing; but at Rome the courtesans perish off every three years, and I can entice her thither—have indeed begun operations already. There is a certain lusty blue-eyed florid-complexioned English knave, I and the Police employ occasionally. You assent, I perceive—no, that's not it—assent I do not say—but you will let me convert my present havings and holdings into cash, and give me time to cross the Alps? 'T is

but a little black-eyed pretty singing Felippa, gay silk-winding girl. I have kept her out of harm's way up to this present; for I always intended to make your life a plague to you with her. 'Tis as well settled once and forever. Some women I have procured will pass Bluphocks, my handsome scoundrel, off for somebody; and once Pippa entangled!—you conceive? Through her singing? Is it a bargain?

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA singing—

*Overhead the tree-tops meet,  
Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;*

*There was naught above me, naught below.*

*My childhood had not learned to know:*

*For, what are the voices of birds*

*—Ah, and of beasts, but words, our words.*

*Only so much more sweet?*

*The knowledge of that with my life begun.*

*But I had so near made out the sun.*

*And counted your stars, the seven and one.*

*Like the fingers of my hand:*

*Nay, I could all but understand*

*Wherefore through heaven the white moon ranges;*

*And just when out of her soft fifty changes*

*No unfamiliar face might over-look me—*

*Suddenly God took me.*

[PIPPA passes.

Mon. [Springing up.] My people—one and all—within there! Gag this villain—tie him hand and foot! He dares . . . I know not half he dares—but remove him—quick! *Miserere mei, Domine!* Quick, I say!

PIPPA'S Chamber again. She enters it.

The bee with his comb,  
The mouse at her dray,  
The grub in his tomb,  
While winter away;

But the fire-fly and hedge-shrew and lob-worm, I pray,

How fare they?

Ha, ha, thanks for your counsel, my Zanze!

"Feast upon lampreys, quaff Bregranze!"—

The summer of life so easy to spend,  
And care for to-morrow so soon put away!

But winter hastens at summer's end,  
And fire-fly, hedge-shrew, lob-worm,  
I pray,

How fare they?

No bidding me then to . . . what did Zanze say?

"Pare your nails pearlwise, get your small feet shoes

More like" . . . (what said she?)—"and less like canoes!"

How pert that girl was!—would I be those pert

Impudent staring women! It had done me,

However, surely no such mighty hurt  
To learn his name who passed that jest upon me:

No foreigner, that I can recollect,  
Came, as she says, a month since, to inspect

Our silk-mills—none with blue eyes and thick rings

Of raw-silk-colored hair, at all events.

Well, if old Luca keep his good intents,  
We shall do better, see what next year brings!

I may buy shoes, my Zanze, not appear  
More destitute than you perhaps next year!

Bluph . . . something! I had caught the uncouth name

But for Monsignor's people's sudden clatter

Above us—bound to spoil such idle chatter

As ours: it were indeed a serious matter  
If silly talk like ours should put to shame

The pious man, the man devoid of blame,  
The . . . ah but—ah but, all the same,

No mere mortal has a right

To carry that exalted air;

Best people are not angels quite:

While—not the worst of people's doings  
scare [spare!

The devil; so there's that proud look to  
Which is mere counsel to myself,  
mind! for

I have just been the holy Monsignor:

And I was you, too, Luigi's gentle mother,

And you too, Luigi!—how that Luigi started

Out of the turret—doubtlessly departed  
On some good errand or another,

For he passed just now in a traveller's trim,

And the sullen company that prowled  
About his path, I noticed, scowled

As if they had lost a prey in him.

And I was Jules the sculptor's bride,  
And I was Ottima beside,  
And now what am I?—tired of fooling.  
Day for folly, night for schooling!  
New year's day is over and spent,  
Ill or well, I must be content.

Even my lily's asleep. I vow:  
Wake up—here's a friend I've plucked  
you!

Call this flower a heart's-ease now!  
Something rare, let me instruct you,  
Is this, with petals triply swollen.  
Three times spotted, thrice the pollen;  
While the leaves and parts that witness  
Old proportions and their fitness,  
Here remain unchanged, unmoved now:  
Call this pampered thing improved now!  
Suppose there's a king of the flowers  
And a girl-show held in his bowers—  
"Look ye, buds, this growth of ours,"  
Says he, "Zanze from the Brenta,  
I have made her gorge polenta  
Till both cheeks are near as bouncing  
As her . . . name there's no pronounc-  
ing!

See this heightened color too,  
For she swilled Breganze wine  
Till her nose turned deep carmine;  
'T was but white when wild she grew.  
And only by this Zanze's eyes  
Of which we could not change the size,  
The magnitude of all achieved  
Otherwise, may be perceived."

Oh what a drear dark close to my poor  
day!

How could that red sun drop in that  
black cloud?

Ah Pippa, morning's rule is moved away,  
Dispensed with, never more to be al-  
lowed!

Day's turn is over, now arrives the  
night's.

Oh lark, be day's apostle  
To mavis, merle and throstle,  
Bid them their betters jostle  
From day and its delights!  
But at night, brother owlet, over the  
woods,

Toll the world to thy chantry;  
Sing to the bats' sleek sisterhoods  
Full complines with gallantry:  
Then, owls and bats,  
Cows and twats,  
Monks and nuns, in a cloister's moods,  
Adjourn to the oak-stump pantry!

*[After she has begun to undress herself.]*  
Now, one thing I should like to really  
know:

How near I ever might approach all  
these

I only fancied being, this long day:  
—Approach, I mean, so as to touch them,  
so

As to . . . in some way . . . move them—  
if you please,

Do good or evil to them some slight way.  
For instance, if I wind

Silk to-morrow, my silk may bind

And border Ottima's cloak's hem.  
*[Sitting on the bedside]*

Ah me, and my important part with  
them,

This morning's hymn half promised  
when I rose!

True in some sense or other, I suppose.

God bless me! I can pray no more to-  
night.  
*[As she lies down.]*

No doubt, some way or other, hymnssay  
right.

*All service ranks the same with God—  
With God, whose puppets, best and worst,  
Are we; there is no last nor first.*

*[She sleeps.]*  
1841.

## CAVALIER TUNES

### I. MARCHING ALONG

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,  
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament  
swing:

And, pressing a troop unable to stoop  
And see the rogues flourish and honest  
folk droop,

Marched them along, fifty-score strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this  
song.

God for King Charles! Pym and such  
carles

To the Devil that prompts 'em their  
treasonous parles!

Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,  
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor  
sup

Till you're—

CHORUS.—Marching along, fifty-score  
strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen,  
singing this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies'  
knell.

Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young  
Harry as well!

gland, good cheer! Rupert is near!  
 antish and loyalists, keep we not here.  
 HORUS.—Marching along, fifty-score  
     strong,  
     Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-  
     ing this song?

en, God for King Charles! Pym and  
 his snarls  
 the Devil that pricks on such pestilent  
 carles!  
 ld by the right, you double your  
 might;  
 onward to Nottingham, fresh for  
 the fight,  
 HORUS.—March we along, fifty-score  
     strong,  
     Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-  
     ing this song!

## II. GIVE A ROUSE

ing Charles, and who 'll do him right  
 now?  
 ing Charles, and who 's ripe for fight  
 now?  
 re a rouse: here 's, in hell's despite  
 now,  
 ing Charles!  
 io gave me the goods that went since?  
 io raised me the house that sank once?  
 io helped me to gold I spent since?  
 io found me in wine you drank once?  
 HORUS.—King Charles, and who'll do  
     him right now?  
     King Charles, and who 's ripe  
     for fight now?  
     Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's  
     despite now,  
     King Charles!

whom used my boy George quaff else,  
 the old fool's side that begot him?  
 r whom did he cheer and laugh else,  
 vile Noll's damned troopers shot him?  
 HORUS.—King Charles, and who'll do  
     him right now?  
     King Charles, and who 's ripe  
     for fight now?  
     Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's  
     despite now,  
     King Charles!

## III. BOOT AND SADDLE

ot, saddle, to horse and away!  
 scue my castle before the hot day  
 ightens to blue from its silvery gray.  
 HORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse and  
     away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd  
 say;  
 Many 's the friend there, will listen and  
 pray  
 "God's luck to gallants that strike up  
 the lay—  
 CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and  
     away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,  
 Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Round-  
 heads' array:  
 Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by  
 my fay,  
 CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and  
     away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest  
 and gay,  
 Laughs when you talk of surrendering,  
 "Nay!  
 I've better counsellors; what counsel  
 they?  
 CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and  
     away!" 1842.

THROUGH THE METIDJA TO ABD-  
EL-KADR

As I ride, as I ride,  
 With a full heart for my guide,  
 So its tide rocks my side,  
 As I ride, as I ride,  
 That, as I were double-eyed,  
 He, in whom our Tribes confide,  
 Is descried, ways untried,  
 As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride  
 To our Chief and his Allied,  
 Who dares chide my heart's pride  
 As I ride, as I ride?  
 Or are witnesses denied—  
 Through the desert waste and wide  
 Do I glide unespied  
 As I ride, as I ride?

As I ride, as I ride,  
 When an inner voice has cried,  
 The sands slide, nor abide  
 (As I ride, as I ride)  
 O'er each visioned homicide  
 That came vaunting (has he lied?)  
 To reside—where he died,  
 As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride,  
 Ne'er has spur my swift horse plied,  
 Yet his hide, streaked and pied,

As I ride, as I ride,  
Shows where sweat has sprung and dried,  
—Zebra-footed, ostrich-thighed—  
How has vied stride with stride  
As I ride, as I ride!

As I ride, as I ride,  
Could I loose what Fate has tied,  
Ere I pried, she should hide  
(As I ride, as I ride)  
All that's meant me—satisfied  
When the Prophet and the Bride  
Stop veins I'd have subsided  
As I ride, as I ride! 1849.

## CRISTINA

SHE should never have looked at me  
If she meant I should not love her!  
There are plenty . . . men you call such,  
I suppose . . . she may discover  
All her soul to, if she pleases,  
And yet leave much as she found  
them:  
But I'm not so, and she knew it  
When she fixed me, glancing round  
them.

What? To fix me thus meant nothing?  
But I can't tell (there's my weakness)  
What her look said!—no vile cant, sure,  
About "need to strew the bleakness  
Of some lone shore with its pearl-seed,  
That the sea feels"—no "strange  
yearning  
That such souls have, most to lavish  
Where there's chance of least return-  
ing."

Oh, we're sunk enough here, God knows!  
But not quite so sunk that moments,  
Sure though seldom, are denied us,  
When the spirit's true endowments  
Stand out plainly from its false ones,  
And apprise it if pursuing  
Or the right way or the wrong way,  
To its triumph or undoing.

There are flashes struck from midnights,  
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,  
Whereby piled-up honors perish,  
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,  
While just this or that poor impulse,  
Which for once had play unstified,  
Seems the sole work of a lifetime,  
That away the rest have trifled.

Doubt you if, in some such moment,  
As she fixed me, she felt clearly,  
Ages past the soul existed,

Here an age 't is resting merely,  
And hence fleets again for ages,  
While the true end, sole and single  
It stops here for is, this love-way,  
With some other soul to mingle?

Else it loses what it lived for,  
And eternally must lose it;  
Better ends may be in prospect,  
Deeper blisses (if you choose it).  
But this life's end and this love-bliss  
Have been lost here. Doubt y  
whether  
This she felt as, looking at me,  
Mine and her souls rushed together!

Oh, observe! Of course, next morn  
The world's honors in derision,  
Trampled out the light forever:  
Never fear but there's provision  
Of the devil's to quench knowledge  
Lest we walk the earth in rapture!  
—Making those who catch God's  
Just so much more prize their capt

Such am I; the secret 's mine now!  
She has lost me, I have gained her;  
Her soul's mine: and thus, grown p  
fect,  
I shall pass my life's remainder,  
Life will just hold out the proving  
Both our powers, alone and bled  
And then come the next life quickly!  
This world's use will have been end  
1849.

## INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAM

You know, we French stormed Bati  
bon:  
A mile or so away,  
On a little mound, Napoleon  
Stood on our storming-day;  
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,  
Legs wide, arms locked behind,  
As if to balance the prone brow  
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused "My plan  
That soar, to earth may fall,  
Let once my army-leader Lannes  
Waver at yonder wall,"—  
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes the  
flew  
A rider, bound on bound  
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew  
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,  
And held himself erect

horse's mane, a boy :  
 y could suspect—  
 kept his lips compressed,  
 y blood came through)  
 twice ere you saw his breast  
 at shot in two.

ed he, "Emperor, by God's

t you Ratisbon !  
 l's in the market-place,  
 ll be there anon  
 flag-bird flap his vans  
 to heart's desire,  
 1!" The chief's eye flashed ;  
 ans  
 again like fire.

eye flashed ; but presently  
 tself, as sheathes  
 mother-eagle's eye  
 bruised eaglet breathes ;  
 ounded !" "Nay," the sol-  
 pride  
 o the quick, he said :  
 , Sire !" And his chief be-

ie boy fell dead. 1842.

#### ' LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

ast Duchess painted on the  
 f she were alive. I call  
 a wonder, now : Fra Pan-  
 hands  
 sily a day, and there she  
 e you sit and look at her ? I  
 olf " by design, for never  
 ke you that pictured coun-  
 e.  
 and passion of its earnest  
 .  
 If they turned (since none  
 y  
 I have drawn for you, but I)  
 las they would ask me, if  
 urst,  
 glance came there ; so, not  
 st  
 turn and ask thus. Sir, 't  
 ot  
 l's presence only, called that

Of joy into the Duchess' cheek : perhaps  
 Fra Pandolf chanced to say, " Her man-  
 tie laps  
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or  
 " Paint

Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
 Half-flush that dies along her throat : "  
 such stuff

Was courtesy, she thought, and cause  
 enough

For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
 A heart—how shall I say?—too soon  
 made glad.

Too easily impressed : she liked whate'er  
 She looked on, and her looks went every-  
 where.

Sir, 't was all one ! My favor at her  
 breast,

The dropping of the daylight in the  
 West,

The bough of cherries some officious  
 fool

Broke in the orchard for her, the white  
 mule

She rode with round the terrace—all and  
 each

Would draw from her alike the approv-  
 ing speech,

Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—  
 good ! but thanked

Somehow—I know not how—as if she  
 ranked

My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old  
 name

With anybody's gift. Who 'd stoop to  
 blame

This sort of trifling ? Even had you skill  
 In speech—(which I have not)—to make  
 your will

Quite clear to such an one, and say,  
 "Just this

Or that in you disgusts me ; here you  
 miss,

Or there exceed the mark"—and if she  
 let

Herself be lessened so, nor plainly set  
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made  
 excuse,

—E'en then would be some stooping ;  
 and I choose

Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no  
 doubt,

Whene'er I passed her ; but who passed  
 without

Much the same smile ? This grew ; I  
 gave commands ;

Then all smiles stopped together. There  
 she stands

As if alive. Will 't please you rise ? We



The company below, then. I repeat,  
The Count your master's known munif-  
cence

Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed ;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I  
avowed

At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune,  
though,

Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze  
for me ! 1843.

#### IN A GONDOLA

##### *He sings*

I SEND my heart up to thee, all my heart  
In this my singing.

For the stars help me, and the sea bears  
part ;

The very night is clinging  
Closer to Venice' streets to leave one  
space

Above me, whence thy face  
May light my joyous heart to thee its  
dwelling place.

##### *She speaks*

Say after me, and try to say  
My very words, as if each word  
Came from you of your own accord,  
In your own voice, in your own way :

"This woman's heart and soul and brain  
Are mine as much as this gold chain  
She bids me wear ; which " (say again)

"I choose to make by cherishing  
A precious thing, or choose to fling  
Over the boat-side, ring by ring."  
And yet once more say . . . no word  
more !

Since words are only words. Give o'er !

Unless you call me, all the same,  
Familiarly by my pet name,  
Which if the Three should hear you call,  
And me reply to, would proclaim  
At once our secret to them all.

Ask of me, too, command me, blame.—  
Do, break down the partition-wall  
'T wixt us, the daylight world beholds  
Curtained in dusk and splendid folds !  
What's left but—all of me to take ?

I am the Three's : prevent them, slake  
Your thirst ! 'T is said, the Arab sage,  
In practising with gems, can loose  
Their subtle spirit in his cruce  
And leave but ashes : so, sweet mage,

Leave them my ashes when thy use  
Sucks out my soul, thy heritage !

##### *He sings*

Past we glide, and past, and past !

What's that poor Agnese doing  
Where they make the shutters fast ?  
Gray Zanobi 's just a-wooing  
To his couch the purchased bride :  
Past we glide !

Past we glide, and past, and past !

Why's the Pucci Palace flaring  
Like a beacon to the blast ?  
Guests by hundreds, not one caring  
If the dear host's neck were wried :  
Past we glide !

##### *She sings*

The moth's kiss, first !

Kiss me as if you made believe  
You were not sure, this eve,  
How my face, your flower, had pined  
Its petals up ; so, here and there  
You brush it, till I grow aware  
Who wants me, and wide ope I bunt.

The bee's kiss, now !

Kiss me as if you entered gay  
My heart at some noonday,  
A bud that dares not disallow  
The claim, so all is rendered up,  
And passively its shattered cup  
Over your head to sleep I bow.

##### *He sings*

What are we two ?

I am a Jew,  
And carry thee, farther than friends  
can pursue,

To a feast of our tribe :  
Where they need thee to bribe  
The devil that blasts them unless he  
imbibe

Thy . . . Scatter the vision forever !  
And now,

As of old, I am I, thou art thou !

Say again, what we are ?

The sprite of a star,  
I lure thee above where the destinies bar  
My plumes their full play  
Till a ruddier ray

Than my pale one announce there is  
withering away

Some . . . Scatter the vision forever !  
And now,

As of old, I am I, thou art thou !

*He muses*

which were best, to roam or rest?  
 land's lap or the water's breast?  
 eep on yellow millet-sheaves,  
 swim in lucid shallows just  
 ing water-lily leaves,  
 inch from Death's black fingers,  
 thrust  
 ck you, whom release he must;  
 ch life were best on Summer eves?

*He speaks, musing*

back; could thought of mine im-  
 prove you?  
 a this shoulder let there spring  
 ing; from this, another wing;  
 gs, not legs and feet, shall move  
 you!  
 v-white must they spring, to blend  
 a your flesh, but I intend  
 shall deepen to the end,  
 der, into burning gold,  
 both wings crescent-wise enfold  
 r perfect self, from 'neath your feet  
 er your head, where, lo, they meet  
 a million sword-blades hurled  
 unce from you to the world!

ue me thou, the only real!  
 scare away this mad ideal  
 came, nor motions to depart!  
 lks! Now, stay ever as thou art!

*Still he muses*

at if the Three should catch at last  
 serenader? While there 's cast  
 's cloak about my head, and fast  
 pinions me, Himself has past  
 stylet through my back; I reel;  
 . . . is it thou I feel?

r trail me, these three godless knaves,  
 every church that saints and saves,  
 stop till, where the cold sea raves  
 ido's wet accursed graves,  
 r scoop mine, roll me to its brink,  
 . . . on thy breast I sink!

*She replies, musing.*

your arm o'er the boat-side, elbow-  
 deep,  
 do: thus: were death so unlike  
 sleep.  
 ight this way? Death 's to fear from  
 flame or steel,  
 on doubtless; but from water—  
 feel!

Go find the bottom! Would you stay  
 me? There! [grass  
 Now pluck a great blade of that ribbon-  
 To plait in where the foolish jewel was,  
 I flung away: since you have praised  
 my hair,  
 'T is proper to be choice in what I wear.

*He speaks*

Row home? must we row home? Too  
 surely  
 Know I where its front 's demurely  
 Over the Giudecca piled;  
 Window just with window mating,  
 Door on door exactly waiting,  
 All 's the set face of a child:  
 But behind it, where 's a trace  
 Of the staidness and reserve,  
 And formal lines without a curve,  
 In the same child's playing-face?  
 No two windows look one way  
 O'er the small sea-water thread  
 Below them. Ah, the autumn day  
 I, passing, saw you overhead!  
 First, out a cloud of curtain blew,  
 Then a sweet cry, and last came you -  
 To catch your lory that must needs  
 Escape just then, of all times then,  
 To peck a tall plant's fleecy seeds,  
 And make me happiest of men.  
 I scarce could breathe to see you reach  
 So far back o'er the balcony  
 To catch him ere he climbed too high  
 Above you in the Smyrna peach,  
 That quick the round smooth cord of  
 gold,  
 This coiled hair on your head, unrolled,  
 Fell down you like a gorgeous snake  
 The Roman girls were wont, of old,  
 When Rome there was, for coolness' sake  
 To let lie curling o'er their bosoms.  
 Dear lory, may his beak retain  
 Ever its delicate rose stain  
 As if the wounded lotus-blossoms  
 Had marked their thief to know again!

Stay longer yet, for others' sake  
 Than mine! What should your cham-  
 ber do?  
 —With all its rarities that ache  
 In silence while day lasts, but wake  
 At night-time and their life renew,  
 Suspended just to pleasure you  
 Who brought against their will together  
 These objects, and, while day lasts,  
 weave  
 Around them such a magic tether  
 That dumb they look: your harp, be-  
 lieve,

With all the sensitive tight strings  
Which dare not speak, now to itself  
Breathes slumberously, as if some elf

Went in and out the chords, his wings  
Make murmur wheresoe'er they graze,  
As an angel may, between the maze  
Of midnight palace-pillars, on  
And on, to sow God's plagues, have gone  
Through guilty glorious Babylon.  
And while such murmurs flow, the  
nymph

Bends o'er the harp-top from her shell  
As the dry limpet for the lymph  
Come with a tune he knows so well.  
And how your statues' hearts must  
swell!

And how your pictures must descend  
To see each other, friend with friend!  
Oh, could you take them by surprise,  
You'd find Schidone's eager Duke  
Doing the quaintest courtesies  
To that prim saint by Haste-thee-Luke!  
And, deeper into her rock den,  
Bold Castelfranco's Magdalen  
You'd find retreated from the ken  
Of that robed counsel-keeping Ser—  
As if the Tizian thinks of her,  
And is not, rather, gravely bent  
On seeing for himself what toys  
Are these, his progeny invent,  
What litter now the board employs  
Whereon he signed a document  
That got him murdered! Each enjoys  
Its night so well, you cannot break  
The sport up, so, indeed must make  
More stay with me, for others' sake.

*She speaks*

To-morrow, if a harp-string, say,  
Is used to tie the jasmine back  
That overfloods my room with sweets,  
Contrive your Zorzi somehow meets  
My Zanze! If the ribbon's black,  
The Three are watching: keep away!

Your gondola—let Zorzi wreathe  
A mesh of water-weeds about  
Its prow, as if he unaware  
Had struck some quay or bridge-foot  
stair!

That I may throw a paper out  
As you and he go underneath.

There's Zanze's vigilant taper; safe are  
we.

Only one minute more to-night with  
Resume your past self of a month ago!  
Be you the bashful gallant, I will be

The lady with the colder breast than  
snow.

Now bow you, as becomes, nor touch  
my hand

More than I touch yours when I step to  
land,

And say, "All thanks, Siora!"—

Heart to heart  
And lips to lips! Yet once more, ere  
we part,

Clasp me and make me thine, as mine  
thou art!

[*He is surprised, and stabbed.*  
It was ordained to be so, sweet!—and  
best

Comes now, beneath thine eyes, upon  
thy breast.

Still kiss me! Care not for the cowards!  
Care

Only to put aside thy beauteous hair  
My blood will hurt! The Three, I do  
not scorn

To death, because they never lived: but I  
Have lived indeed, and so—(yet one  
more kiss)—can die! 1843.

## THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

### A CHILD'S STORY

(Written for, and inscribed to, W. M.  
the Younger.)<sup>1</sup>

#### I

HAMELIN Town 's in Brunswick,  
By famous Hanover city;  
The river Weser, deep and wide,  
Washes its wall on the southern side;  
A pleasanter spot you never spied;  
But, when begins my ditty,  
Almost five hundred years ago,  
To see the townsfolk suffer so  
From vermin, was a pity.

#### II

Rats!  
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,  
And bit the babies in the cradles,  
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,  
And licked the soup from the cooks'  
own ladles,  
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,  
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,  
And even spoiled the women's chats  
By drowning their speaking  
With shrieking and squeaking  
In fifty different sharps and flats.

<sup>1</sup> The son of William Macready, the famous actor.

## III

At last the people in a body  
 To the Town Hall came flocking :  
 " 'T is clear," cried they, "our Mayor 's  
   a noddy ;  
 And as for our Corporation—shocking  
 To think we buy gowns lined with  
   ermine  
 For dolts that can't or won't determine  
 What 's best to rid us of our vermin !  
 You hope, because you 're old and obese,  
 To find in the furry civic robe ease ?  
 Rouse up, sirs ! Give your brains a rack-  
   ing  
 To find the remedy we 're lacking,  
 Or, sure as fate, we 'll send you pack-  
   ing ! "

At this the Mayor and Corporation  
 Quaked with a mighty consternation.

## IV

An hour they sat in council ;  
 At length the Mayor broke silence :  
 " For a guildler I 'd my ermine gown  
   sell,  
 I wish I were a mile hence !  
 It 's easy to bid one rack one's brain—  
 I 'm sure my poor head aches again,  
 I 've scratched it so, and all in vain.  
 Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap ! "  
 Just as he said this, what should hap  
 At the chamber-door but a gentle tap ?  
 " Bless us," cried the Mayor, " what 's  
   that ? "  
 ( With the Corporation as he sat,  
 Looking little though wondrous fat ;  
 Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister  
 Than a too-long-opened oyster,  
 Save when at noon his paunch grew  
   mutinous  
 For a plate of turtle green and glutinous )  
 " Only a scraping of shoes on the mat ?  
 Anything like the sound of a rat  
 Makes my heart go pit-a-pat ! "

## V

" Come in ! "—the Mayor cried, looking  
 bigger :  
 And in did come the strangest figure !  
 His queer long coat from heel to head  
 Was half of yellow and half of red,  
 And he himself was tall and thin,  
 With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,  
 And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,  
 No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,  
 But lips where smiles went out and in ;  
 There was no guessing his kith and kin :  
 And nobody could enough admire

The tall man and his quaint attire.  
 Quoth one : " It 's as my great-grand-  
   sire,  
 Starting up at the Trump of Doom's  
   tone,  
 Had walked this way from his painted  
   tombstone ! "

## VI

He advanced to the council-table :  
 And, " Please your honors," said he,  
 " I 'm able,  
 By means of a secret charm, to draw  
 All creatures living beneath the sun,  
 That creep or swim or fly or run,  
 After me so as you never saw !  
 And I chiefly use my charm  
 On creatures that do people harm,  
 The mole and toad and newt and viper ;  
 And people call me the Pied Piper."  
 ( And here they noticed round his neck  
 A scarf of red and yellow stripe,  
 To match with his coat of the self-same  
   check ;  
 And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;  
 And his fingers, they noticed, were ever  
   straying  
 As if impatient to be playing  
 Upon this pipe, as low it dangled  
 Over his vesture so old-fangled.)  
 " Yet," said he, " poor piper as I am,  
 In Tartary I freed the Cham,  
 Last June, from his huge swarms of  
   gnats ;  
 I eased in Asia the Nizam  
 Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats :  
 And as for what your brain bewilders,  
 If I can rid your town of rats  
 Will you give me a thousand guilders ? "  
 " One? fifty thousand ! "—was the ex-  
   clamation  
 Of the astonished Mayor and Corpora-  
   tion.

## VII

Into the street the Piper stepped,  
 Smiling first a little smile,  
 As if he knew what magic slept  
 In his quiet pipe the while ;  
 Then, like a musical adept,  
 To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,  
 And green and blue his sharp eyes  
   twinkled,  
 Like a candle-flame where salt is  
   sprinkled ;  
 And ere three shrill notes the pipe  
   uttered,  
 You heard as if an army muttered ;  
 And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;

And the grumbling grew to a mighty  
rumbling;  
And out of the houses the rats came  
tumbling.  
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny  
rats,  
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny  
rats,  
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,  
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,  
Cooking tails and pricking whiskers,  
Families by tens and dozens,  
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—  
Followed the Piper for their lives.  
From street to street he piped advancing,  
And step for step they followed dancing,  
Until they came to the river Weser,  
Wherein all plunged and perished!  
—Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,  
Swam across and lived to carry  
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)  
To Rat-land home his commentary:  
Which was, "At the first shrill notes of  
the pipe,  
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,  
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,  
Into a cider-press's gripe:  
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,  
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cup-  
boards,  
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-  
flasks,  
And a breaking the hoops of butter-  
casks:  
And it seemed as if a voice  
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery  
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, re-  
joice!  
The world is grown to one vast dry-  
saltery!  
So munch on, crunch on, take your  
nunccheon,  
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!'  
And just as a bulky sugar puncheon,  
All ready staved, like a great sun shone  
Glorious scarce an inch before me,  
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore  
me!'  
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

## VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin  
people  
Ringing the bells till they rocked the  
steeple.  
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long  
poles, [holes!  
Poke out the nests and block up the

Consult with carpenters and builders,  
And leave in our town not even a trace  
Of the rats!"—when suddenly, up the  
face  
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,  
With a, "First, if you please, my thou-  
sand guilders!"

## IX

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked  
blue;  
So did the Corporation too.  
For council dinners made rare havoc  
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave,  
Hock;  
And half the money would replenish  
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.  
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow  
With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!  
"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a  
knowing wink,  
"Our business was done at the river's  
brink;  
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,  
And what's dead can't come to life, I  
think.  
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink  
From the duty of giving you something  
for drink,  
And a matter of money to put in your  
poke;  
But as for the guilders, what we spoke  
Of them, as you very well know, was in  
joke.  
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.  
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

## X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,  
"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!  
I've promised to visit by dinner time  
Bagdad, and accept the prime  
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's  
rich in,  
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,  
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:  
With him I proved no bargain-driver,  
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!  
And folks who put me in a passion  
May find me pipe after another fashion."

## XI

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think  
I brook  
Being worse treated than a Cook?  
Insulted by a lazy ribald  
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?  
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst.  
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

## XII

nore he stepped into the street,  
 to his lips again  
 his long pipe of smooth straight  
 cane ;  
 ere he blew three notes (such  
 sweet  
 notes as yet musician's cunning  
 er gave the enraptured air)  
 was a rustling that seemed like a  
 bustling  
 merry crowds justling at pitching  
 and hustling ;  
 feet were pattering, wooden shoes  
 clattering,  
 hands clapping and little tongues  
 chattering,  
 like fowls in a farm-yard when  
 barley is scattering.  
 Some the children running.  
 The little boys and girls,  
 rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,  
 sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,  
 laughing and skipping, ran merrily after  
 wonderful music with shouting and  
 laughter.

## XIII

Mayor was dumb, and the Council  
 stood  
 they were changed into blocks of  
 wood,  
 unable to move a step, or cry  
 to children merrily skipping by,  
 could only follow with the eye  
 the joyous crowd at the Piper's back.  
 Now the Mayor was on the rack,  
 his wretched Council's bosoms beat,  
 as the Piper turned from the High Street  
 where the Weser rolled its waters  
 in the way of their sons and daughters !  
 Now, he turned from South to West,  
 to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,  
 after him the children pressed ;  
 it was the joy in every breast.  
 Never can cross that mighty top !  
 forced to let the piping drop,  
 we shall see our children stop !"  
 So, lo, as they reached the mountain-  
 side,  
 a prodigious portal opened wide,  
 a cavern was suddenly hollowed ;  
 the Piper advanced and the children  
 followed,  
 when all were in to the very last,  
 door in the mountain-side shut fast.

Did I say all ? No ! One was lame,  
 And could not dance the whole of the  
 way ;

And in after years if you would blame  
 His sadness, he was used to say, —  
 " It 's dull in our town since my play-  
 mates left !

I can't forget that I'm bereft  
 Of all the pleasant sights they see,  
 Which the Piper also promised me.  
 For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,  
 Joining the town and just at hand,  
 Where waters gushed and fruit-trees  
 grew

And flowers put forth a fairer hue,  
 And everything was strange and new ;  
 The sparrows were brighter than pea-  
 cocks here,

And their dogs outran our fallow deer,  
 And honey-bees had lost their stings,  
 And horses were born with eagles'  
 wings ;

And just as I became assured  
 My lame foot would be speedily cured,  
 The music stopped and I stood still,  
 And found myself outside the hill,  
 Left alone against my will,  
 To go now limping as before,  
 And never hear of that country more !"

## XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin !

There came into many a burgher's pate  
 A text which says that heaven's gate  
 Opens to the rich at as easy rate  
 As the needle's eye takes a camel in !  
 The Mayor sent East, West, North and  
 South,

To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,

Wherever it was men's lot to find him,  
 Silver and gold to his heart's content,  
 If he'd only return the way he went,  
 And bring the children behind him.

But when they saw 't was a lost en-  
 deavor,

And Piper and dancers were gone for-  
 ever,

They made a decree that lawyers never  
 Should think their records dated duly  
 If, after the day of the month and year,  
 These words did not as well appear.

" And so long after what happened here  
 On the Twenty-second of July,

Thirteen hundred and seventy-six :"

And the better in memory to fix  
 The place of the children's last retreat,  
 They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—  
 Where any one playing on pipe or tabor  
 Was sure for the future to lose his labor.

Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern  
 To shock with mirth a street so  
 solemn ;  
 But opposite the place of the cavern  
 They wrote the story on a column.  
 And on the great church-window painted  
 The same, to make the world acquainted  
 How their children were stolen away,  
 And there it stands to this very day.  
 And I must not omit to say  
 That in Transylvania there 's a tribe  
 Of alien people who ascribe  
 The outlandish ways and dress  
 On which their neighbors lay such stress,  
 To their fathers and mothers having  
 risen  
 Out of some subterranean prison  
 Into which they were trepanned  
 Long time ago in a mighty band  
 Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,  
 But how or why, they don't understand.

## XV

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers  
 Of scores out with all men—especially  
 pipers !  
 And, whether they pipe us free from rats  
 or from mice,  
 If we've promised them aught, let us  
 keep our promise ! 1842.

## RUDEL TO THE LADY OF TRIPOLI

I KNOW a Mount, the gracious Sun per-  
 ceives  
 First, when he visits, last, too, when he  
 leaves  
 The world ; and, vainly favored, it repays  
 The day-long glory of his steadfast gaze  
 By no change of its large calm front of  
 snow.  
 And underneath the Mount, a Flower I  
 know,  
 He cannot have perceived, that changes  
 ever  
 At his approach ; and, in the lost en-  
 deavor  
 To live his life, has parted, one by one,  
 With all a flower's true graces, for the  
 grace  
 Of being but a foolish mimic sun,  
 With ray-like florets round a disk-like  
 face.  
 Men nobly call by many a name the  
 Mount  
 As over many a land of theirs its large  
 Calm front of snow like a triumphal  
 targe

Is reared, and still with old names, fresh  
 names vie,  
 Each to its proper praise and own  
 account :  
 Men call the Flower the Sunflower,  
 sportively.

## II

Oh, Angel of the East, one, one gold look  
 Across the waters to this twilight nook,  
 —The far sad waters, Angel, to this  
 nook !

## III

Dear Pilgrim, art thou for the East in-  
 deed ?

Go !—saying ever as thou dost proceed,  
 That I, French Rudel, choose for my  
 device

A sunflower outspread like a sacrifice  
 Before its idol. See ! These inexpert  
 And hurried fingers could not fail to  
 hurt

The woven picture ; 't is a woman's skill  
 Indeed ; but nothing baffled me, so, ill  
 Or well, the work is finished. Say, men  
 feed

On songs I sing, and therefore bask the  
 bees

On my flower's breast as on a platform  
 broad :

But as the flower's concern is not for  
 these

But solely for the sun, so men applaud  
 In vain this Rudel, he not looking here  
 But to the East—the East ! Go, say this,  
 Pilgrim dear ! 1842.

THERE'S A WOMAN LIKE A DEW-  
DROP

[FROM A BLOT IN THE SCUTCHEON]

THERE 's a woman like a dewdrop, she's  
 so purer than the purest ;  
 And her noble heart 's the noblest, yes,  
 and her sure faith 's the surest :  
 And her eyes are dark and humid, like  
 the depth on depth of lustre  
 Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sun-  
 nier than the wild-grape cluster.  
 Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her  
 neck's rose-misted marble :  
 Then her voice's music . . . call it the  
 well's bubbling, the bird's warble !  
 And this woman says, " My days were  
 sunless and my nights were moon-  
 less,

Parched the pleasant April herbage, and  
the lark's heart's outbreak tune-  
less,  
If you loved me not!" And I who—(ah,  
for words of flame!) adore her,  
Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate  
palpably before her—  
I may enter at her portal soon, as now  
her lattice takes me,  
And by noontide as by midnight make  
her mine, as hers she makes  
me! 1843.

THE LOST LEADER<sup>1</sup>

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,  
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—  
Found the one gift of which fortune be-  
reft us.  
Lost all the others she lets us devote;  
They, with the gold to give, doled him  
out silver,  
So much was theirs who so little al-  
lowed;  
How all our copper had gone for his  
service!  
Rags—were they purple, his heart had  
been proud!

<sup>1</sup> Browning admitted that in writing this poem he had Wordsworth in mind, but insisted that he did not mean it as an exact portrait of Wordsworth. Browning's mature judgment on the matter is best expressed in his own words: "I did in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about 'handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon.' These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore." See also Mrs. Orr's Browning (*Life and Letters*), I, 191. Compare Shelley's early Sonnet

## TO WORDSWORTH

POET of Nature, thou hast wept to know  
That things depart which never may return:  
Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first  
glow,  
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to  
mourn.  
These common woes I feel. One loss is mine  
Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.  
Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine  
On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:  
Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood  
Above the blind and battling multitude:  
In honored poverty thy voice did weave  
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty.  
Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,  
Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to  
be. 1815. 1816.

We that had loved him so, followed him,  
honored him,  
Lived in his mild and magnificent  
eye,  
Learned his great language, caught his  
clear accents,  
Made him our pattern to live and to  
die!  
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for  
us,  
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they  
watch from their graves!  
He alone breaks from the van and the  
freemen,  
—He alone sinks to the rear and the  
slaves!  
We shall march prospering,—not  
through his presence;  
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his  
lyre;  
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his  
quiescence,  
Still bidding crouch whom the rest  
bade aspire:  
Blot out his name, then, record one lost  
soul more,  
One task more declined, one more  
footpath untrod,  
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for  
angels,  
One wrong more to man, one more in-  
sult to God!  
Life's night begins: let him never come  
back to us!  
There would be doubt, hesitation and  
pain,  
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer  
of twilight,  
Never glad confident morning again!  
Best fight on well, for we taught him—  
strike gallantly.  
Menace our heart ere we master his  
own;  
Then let him receive the new knowledge  
and wait us,  
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the  
throne! 1845.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD  
NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX<sup>1</sup>

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and  
he;  
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped  
all three;

<sup>1</sup> This galloping ballad, which has no historical foundation, was written at sea, off Cape St. Vincent. See Mrs. Orr's Browning, I, 144-45.



"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the  
gatebolts undrew;  
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us gallop-  
ing through;  
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank  
to rest,  
And into the midnight we galloped  
abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the  
great pace  
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never  
changing our place;  
I turned in my saddle and made its  
girths tight,  
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the  
pique right,  
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained  
slacker the bit,  
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'T was moonset at starting; but while  
we drew near,  
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight  
dawned clear;  
At Boom, a great yellow star came out  
to see;  
At Duffeld, 't was morning as plain as  
could be:  
And from Mecheln church-steeple we  
heard the half-chime,  
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there  
is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the  
sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black  
every one, [ing past,  
To stare through the mist at us gallop-  
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at  
last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting  
away  
The haze, as some bluff river headland  
its spray:

And his low head and crest, just one  
sharp ear bent back  
For my voice, and the other pricked out  
on his track;  
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever  
that glance  
O'er its white edge at me, his own  
master, askance!  
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which  
aye and anon [ing on,  
His fierce lips shook upwards in gallop-

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned: and cried  
Joris, "Stay spur!"

Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's  
not in her.

We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard  
the quick wheeze  
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and  
staggering knees,  
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the  
flank,  
As down on her haunches she shuddered  
and sank.

So, we were left galloping. Joris and I.  
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in  
the sky; [laugh,  
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless  
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright  
stubble like chaff;  
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang  
white,  
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is  
in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a  
moment his roan  
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as  
a stone;  
And there was my Roland to bear the  
whole weight  
Of the news which alone could save Aix  
from her fate,  
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to  
the brim.  
And with circles of red for his eye-  
sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each hol-  
ster let fall,  
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt  
and all, [his ear,  
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted  
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse  
without peer;  
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang,  
any noise, bad or good,  
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped  
and stood.

And all I remember is—friends flocking  
round  
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees  
on the ground;  
And no voice but was praising this Rol-  
and of mine,  
As I poured down his throat our last  
measure of wine,  
Which (the burgesses voted by common  
consent)  
Was no more than his due who brought  
good news from Ghent.

1838. 1845.

## EARTH'S IMMORTALITIES

## FAME

SEE, as the prettiest graves will do in  
time,  
Our poet's wants the freshness of its  
prime;  
Spite of the sexton's browsing horse, the  
sods  
Have struggled through its binding osier  
rods;  
Headstone and half-sunk footstone lean  
awry,  
Wanting the brick-work promised by-  
and-by;  
How the minute gray lichens, plate o'er  
plate,  
Have softened down the crisp-cut name  
and date!

## LOVE

So, the year 's done with!  
(*Love me forever!*)  
All March begun with,  
April's endeavor;  
May-wreaths that bound me  
June needs must sever;  
Now snows fall round me,  
Quenching June's fever—  
(*Love me forever!*) 1845.

## MEETING AT NIGHT

THE gray sea and the long black land;  
And the yellow half-moon large and low;  
And the startled little waves that leap  
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,  
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,  
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;  
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;  
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch  
And blue spurt of a lighted match,  
And a voice less loud, through its joys  
and fears,  
Than the two hearts beating each to each!  
1845.

## PARTING AT MORNING

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,  
And the sun looked over the mountain's  
rim;  
And straight was a path of gold for him,  
And the need of a world of men for me.  
1845.

## SONG

NAY but you, who do not love her,  
Is she not pure gold, my mistress?  
Holds earth aught—speak truth—above  
her?

Aught like this tress, see, and this tress,  
And this last fairest tress of all,  
So fair, see, ere I let it fall?

Because you spend your lives in praising;  
To praise, you search the wide world  
over:

Then why not witness, calmly gazing,  
If earth holds aught—speak truth—  
above her?

Above this tress, and this, I touch  
But cannot praise, I love so much!  
1845.

## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

OH, to be in England  
Now that April's there,  
And whoever wakes in England  
Sees, some morning, unaware,  
That the lowest boughs and the brush-  
wood sheaf  
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard  
bough  
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,  
And the whitethroat builds, and all the  
swallows!

Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in  
the hedge

Leans to the field and scatters on the  
clover

Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent  
spray's edge—

That's the wise thrush: he sings each  
song twice over,

Lest you should think he never could re-  
capture

The first fine careless rapture!

And though the fields look rough with  
hoary dew,

All will be gay when noontide wakes  
anew

The buttercups, the little children's  
dower

—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-  
flower!  
1845.

## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the  
Northwest died away;

Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking  
 into Cadiz Bay ;  
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in  
 face Trafalgar lay ;  
 In the dimmest Northeast distance  
 dawned Gibraltar grand and gray ;  
 " Here and here did England help me :  
 how can I help England ? "—say,

Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to  
 God to praise and pray,  
 While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent  
 over Africa. 1838. 1845.

#### TIME'S REVENGES

I 'VE a Friend, over the sea ;  
 I like him, but he loves me.  
 It all grew out of the books I write ;  
 They find such favor in his sight  
 That he slaughters you with savage looks  
 Because you don't admire my books.  
 He does himself though,—and if some  
 vein

Were to snap to-night in this heavy  
 brain,

To-morrow month, if I lived to try,  
 Round should I just turn quietly,  
 Or out of the bedclothes stretch my hand  
 Till I found him, come from his foreign  
 land

To be my nurse in this poor place,  
 And make my broth and wash my face  
 And light my fire and, all the while,  
 Bear with his old good-humored smile  
 That I told him " Better have kept away  
 Than come and kill me, night and day.  
 With, worse than fever throbs and  
 shoots,

The creaking of his clumsy boots."  
 I am as sure that this he would do,  
 As that Saint Paul's is striking two.  
 And I think I rather . . . woe is me !

—Yes, rather should see him than not  
 see.

If lifting a hand could seat him there  
 Before me in the empty chair  
 To-night, when my head aches indeed,  
 And I can neither think nor read,  
 Nor make these purple fingers hold  
 The pen ; this garret's freezing cold !

And I've a Lady—there he wakes,  
 The laughing fiend and prince of snakes  
 Within me, at her name, to pray  
 Fate send some creature in the way  
 Of my love for her, to be down-torn,  
 Upthrust and outward-borne.

So I might prove myself that sea  
 Of passion which I needs must be !  
 Call my thoughts false and my fancies  
 quaint

And my style infirm and its figures faint,  
 All the critics say, and more blame yet,  
 And not one angry word you get.  
 But, please you, wonder I would put  
 My cheek beneath that lady's foot  
 Rather than trample under mine  
 The laurels of the Florentine,  
 And you shall see how the devil spends  
 A fire God gave for other ends !  
 I tell you, I ride up and down  
 This garret, crowned with love's best  
 crown,

And feasted with love's perfect feast,  
 To think I kill for her, at least,  
 Body and soul and peace and fame,  
 Alike youth's end and manhood's aim,  
 —So is my spirit, as flesh with sin,  
 Filled full, eaten out and in  
 With the face of her, the eyes of her,  
 The lips, the little chin, the stir  
 Of shadow round her mouth ; and she  
 — I 'll tell you—calmly would decree  
 That I should roast at a slow fire,  
 If that would compass her desire  
 And make her one whom they invite  
 To the famous ball to-morrow night.

There may be heaven : there must be  
 hell ;  
 Meantime, there is our earth here—  
 well ! 1845.

#### THE ITALIAN IN ENGLAND

THAT second time they hunted me  
 From hill to plain, from shore to sea.  
 And Austria, hounding far and wide  
 Her blood-hounds through the country-  
 side,

Breathed hot and instant on my trace.—  
 I made six days a hiding-place  
 Of that dry green old aqueduct  
 Where I and Charles, when boys, have  
 plucked

The fire-flies from the roof above.  
 Bright creeping through the moss they  
 love :

—How long it seems since Charles was  
 lost !

Six days the soldiers crossed and crossed  
 The country in my very sight ;  
 And when that peril ceased at night,  
 The sky broke out in red dismay  
 With signal fires : well, there I lay  
 Close covered o'er in my recess,

Up to the neck in ferns and cress,  
Thinking on Metternich our friend,  
And Charles's miserable end,  
And much beside, two days; the third,  
Hunger o'ercame me when I heard  
The peasants from the village go  
To work among the maize; you know,  
With us in Lombardy, they bring  
Provisions packed on mules, a string  
With little bells that cheer their task,  
And casks, and boughs on every cask  
To keep the sun's heat from the wine;  
These I let pass in jingling line,  
And, close on them, dear noisy crew,  
The peasants from the village, too;  
For at the very rear would troop  
Their wives and sisters in a group  
To help, I knew. When these had  
passed,

I threw my glove to strike the last,  
Taking the chance: she did not start,  
Much less cry out, but stooped apart,  
One instant rapidly glanced round,  
And saw me beckon from the ground:  
A wild bush grows and hides my crypt:  
She picked my glove up while she  
stripped

A branch off, then rejoined the rest  
With that; my glove lay in her breast.  
Then I drew breath: they disappeared:  
It was for Italy I feared.

An hour, and she returned alone  
Exactly where my glove was thrown.  
Meanwhile came many thoughts; on me  
Rested the hopes of Italy:  
I had devised a certain tale  
Which, when 't was told her, could not  
fail

Persuade a peasant of its truth;  
I meant to call a freak of youth  
This hiding, and give hopes of pay,  
And no temptation to betray.  
But when I saw that woman's face,  
Its calm simplicity of grace,  
Our Italy's own attitude  
In which she walked thus far, and stood,  
Planting each naked foot so firm,  
To crush the snake and spare the worm—  
At first sight of her eyes, I said,  
"I am that man upon whose head  
They fix the price, because I hate  
The Austrians over us: the State  
Will give you gold—oh, gold so much!—  
If you betray me to their clutch,  
And be your death, for aught I know,  
If once they find you saved their foe.  
Now, you must bring me food and drink,  
And also paper, pen and ink,

And carry safe what I shall write  
To Padua, which you'll reach at night  
Before the duomo shuts; go in,  
And wait till Tenebræ begin;  
Walk to the third confessional,  
Between the pillar and the wall.  
And kneeling whisper, *Whence comes  
peace?*

Say it a second time, then cease;  
And if the voice inside returns,  
*From Christ and Freedom; what concerns  
The cause of Peace?*—for answer, slip  
My letter where you placed your lip;  
Then come back happy we have done  
Our mother service—I, the son,  
As you the daughter of our land!"

Three mornings more, she took her  
stand

In the same place, with the same eyes:  
I was no surer of sunrise  
Than of her coming. We conferred  
Of her own prospects, and I heard  
She had a lover—stout and tall,  
She said—then let her eyelids fall,  
"He could do much"—as if some doubt  
Entered her heart,—then, passing out,  
"She could not speak for others, who  
Had other thoughts; herself she knew:"  
And so she brought me drink and food.  
After four days, the scouts pursued  
Another path; at last arrived  
The help my Paduan friends contrived  
To furnish me: she brought the news.  
For the first time I could not choose  
But kiss her hand, and lay my own  
Upon her head—"This faith was shown  
To Italy, our mother; she  
Uses my hand and blesses thee."  
She followed down to the sea-shore;  
I left and never saw her more.

How very long since I have thought  
Concerning—much less wished for—  
aught

Beside the good of Italy,  
For which I live and mean to die!  
I never was in love; and since  
Charles proved false, what shall now  
convince

My inmost heart I have a friend?  
However, if I pleased to spend  
Real wishes on myself—say, three—  
I know at least what one should be.  
I would grasp Metternich until  
I felt his red wet throat distil  
In blood through these two hands. And  
next

—Nor much for that am I perplexed—

Charles, perjured traitor, for his part,  
Should die slow of a broken heart  
Under his new employers. Last  
—Ah, there, what should I wish? For  
fast

Do I grow old and out of strength.  
If I resolved to seek at length  
My father's house again, how scared  
They all would look, and unprepared!  
My brothers live in Austria's pay  
—Disowned me long ago, men say;  
And all my early mates who used  
To praise me so—perhaps induced  
More than one early step of mine—  
Are turning wise: while some opine  
"Freedom grows licence," some suspect  
"Haste breeds delay," and recollect  
They always said, such premature  
Beginnings never could endure!  
So, with a sullen "All's for best,"  
The land seems settling to its rest.  
I think then, I should wish to stand  
This evening in that dear, lost land,  
Over the sea the thousand miles,  
And know if yet that woman smiles  
With the calm smile; some little farm  
She lives in there, no doubt: what harm  
If I sat on the door-side bench,  
And, while her spindle made a trench  
Fantastically in the dust,  
Inquired of all her fortunes—just  
Her children's ages and their names,  
And what may be the husband's aims  
For each of them. I'd talk this out,  
And sit there, for an hour about,  
Then kiss her hand once more, and lay  
Mine on her head, and go my way.

So much for idle wishing—how  
It steals the time! To business now.  
1845.

#### PICTOR IGNOTUS

FLORENCE, 15—

I COULD have painted pictures like that  
youth's  
Ye praise so. How my soul springs  
up! No bar  
Stayed me—ah, thought which saddens  
while it soothes!  
—Never did fate forbid me, star by  
star,  
To outburst on your night with all my  
gift  
Of fires from God: nor would my flesh  
have shrunk  
From seconding my soul, with eyes up-  
lift

And wide to heaven, or, straight like  
thunder, sunk  
To the centre, of an instant; or around  
Turned calmly and inquisitive, to scan  
The license and the limit, space and  
bound,  
Allowed to truth made visible in man.  
And, like that youth ye praise so, all I  
saw,  
Over the canvas could my hand have  
flung,  
Each face obedient to its passion's law,  
Each passion clear proclaimed with-  
out a tongue;  
Whether Hope rose at once in all the  
blood,  
A-tiptoe for the blessing of embrace,  
Or Rapture drooped the eyes, as when  
her brood  
Pull down the nesting dove's heart to  
its place;  
Or Confidence lit swift the forehead up,  
And locked the mouth fast, like a  
castle braved,—  
O human faces, hath it spilt, my cup?  
What did ye give me that I have not  
saved?  
Nor will I say I have not dreamed (how  
well!)  
Of going—I, in each new picture,—  
forth,  
As, making new hearts beat and bosoms  
swell,  
To Pope or Kaiser, East, West, South,  
or North,  
Bound for the calmly satisfied great  
State,  
Or glad aspiring little burgh, it went.  
Flowers cast upon the car which bore  
the freight,  
Through old streets named afresh from  
the event,  
Till it reached home, where learned age  
should greet  
My face, and youth, the star not yet  
distinct  
Above his hair, lie learning at my feet!—  
Oh, thus to live, I and my picture.  
linked  
With love about, and praise, till life  
should end,  
And then not go to heaven, but linger  
here,  
Here on my earth, earth's every man  
my friend,—  
The thought grew frightful, 't was so  
wildly dear!  
But a voice changed it. Glimpses of  
such sights

Have scared me, like the revels  
through a door  
Of some strange house of idols at its  
rites!

This world seemed not the world it  
was before :  
Mixed with my loving trusting ones,  
there trooped

... Who summoned those cold faces  
that begun  
To press on me and judge me? Though  
I stooped

Shrinking, as from the soldiery a  
nun,  
They drew me forth, and spite of me...  
enough!

These buy and sell our pictures, take  
and give,  
Count them for garniture and household-  
stuff.

And where they live needs must our  
pictures live  
And see their faces, listen to their  
prate,

Partakers of their daily pettiness,  
Discussed of,—“This I love, or this I  
hate,

This likes me more, and this affects  
me less!”  
Wherefore I chose my portion. If at  
whiles

My heart sinks, as monotonous I paint  
These endless cloisters and eternal aisles  
With the same series, Virgin, Babe  
and Saint,

With the same cold calm beautiful  
regard,—

At least no merchant traffics in my  
heart;

The sanctuary's gloom at least shall  
ward

Vain tongues from where my pictures  
stand apart :

Only prayer breaks the silence of the  
shrine

While, blackening in the daily candle-  
smoke,

They moulder on the damp wall's  
travertine,

'Mid echoes the light footstep never  
woke.

So, die my pictures ! surely, gently  
die !

O youth, men praise so,—holds their  
praise its worth ?

Blown harshly, keeps the trump its  
golden cry ?

Tastes sweet the water with such  
specks of earth ?

1845.

# THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH.

ROME, 15—

VANITY, saith the preacher, vanity !  
Draw round my bed : is Anselm keep-  
ing back ?

Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I  
know not ! Well—

She, men would have to be your mother  
once.

Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was !  
What's done is done, and she is dead  
beside,

Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,  
And as she died so must we die our-  
selves.

And thence ye may perceive the world  
's a dream.

Life, how and what is it ? As here I lie  
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,  
Hours and long hours in the dead night,  
I ask

“Do I live, am I dead ?” Peace, peace  
seems all.

Saint Praxed's ever was the church for  
peace;

And so, about this tomb of mine. I  
fought

With tooth and nail to save my niche,  
ye know :

—Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my  
care ;

Shrewd was that snatch from out the  
corner South

He graced his carrion with, God curse  
the same !

Yet still my niche is not so cramped but  
thence

One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,  
And somewhat of the choir, those silent  
seats,

And up into the very dome where live  
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to  
lurk :

And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,  
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,  
With those nine columns round me,

two and two,

The odd one at my feet where Anselm  
stands :

Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the  
ripe

As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty  
pulse.

—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-  
stone, [peach,

Put me where I may look at him ! True

Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!  
 Draw close: that conflagration of my church  
 —What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!  
 My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig  
 The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,  
 Drop water gently till the surface sink,  
 And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .  
 Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,  
 And corded up in a tight olive-frail,  
 Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,  
 Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,  
 Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast.  
 Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,  
 That brave Frascati villa with its bath,  
 So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,  
 Like God the Father's globe on both his hands  
 Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,  
 For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!  
 Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:  
 Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?  
 Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—  
 'T was ever antique-black I meant! How else  
 Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?  
 The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me.  
 Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance  
 Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,  
 The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,  
 Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan  
 Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment off.  
 And Moses with the tables . . . but I know  
 Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,  
 Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope  
 To revel down my villas while I gasp  
 Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine  
 Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!  
 Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!

'T is jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve.  
 My bath must needs be left behind, alas!  
 One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,  
 There 's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—  
 And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray  
 Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts,  
 And mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs?  
 —That 's if ye carve my epitaph aright,  
 Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,  
 No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—  
 Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!  
 And then how I shall lie through centuries,  
 And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,  
 And see God made and eaten all day long,  
 And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste  
 Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!  
 For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,  
 Dying in state and by such slow degrees,  
 I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,  
 And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,  
 And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop  
 Into great laps and folds of sculptor's work:  
 And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts  
 Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,  
 About the life before I lived this life,  
 And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,  
 Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,  
 Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,  
 And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,  
 And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,  
 —Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?  
 No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!  
 Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.  
 All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope  
 My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?

Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,  
They glitter like your mother's for my  
soul,

Or ye would heighten my impoverished  
frieze, [vase

Piece out its starved design, and fill my  
With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,  
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx  
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus  
down,

To comfort me on my entablature  
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask

"Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave  
me, there!

For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude  
To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it!  
Stone—

Gristone, a-crumble! Clammy squares  
which sweat [through—

As if the corpse they keep were oozing  
And no more *lapis* to delight the world!

Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,  
But in a row: and, going, turn your backs

—Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,  
And leave me in my church, the church  
for peace,

That I may watch at leisure if he leers—  
Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-  
stone,

As still he envied me, so fair she was!<sup>1</sup>  
1845.

## SAUL

## I

SAID Abner, "At last thou art come!

Ere I tell, ere thou speak,

Kiss my cheek, wish me well!" Then I  
wished it, and did kiss his cheek.

And he: "Since the King, O my friend,  
for thy countenance sent,

Neither drunken nor eaten have we;  
nor until from his tent

<sup>1</sup> "I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit,—its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much solution before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal." (*Ruskin*.) Other aspects of the Renaissance spirit, finer but equally true, are expressed, with similar concentration, in Old Pictures in Florence, Pictor Ignotus, Andrea del Sarto, The Grammarian's Funeral, etc. etc.

Thou return with the joyful assurance  
the King liveth yet,

Shall our lip with the honey be bright,  
with the water be wet.

For out of the black mid-tent's silence,  
a space of three days,

Not a sound hath escaped to thy ser-  
vants, of prayer nor of praise.

To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have  
ended their strife,

And that, faint in his triumph, the mon-  
arch sinks back upon life.

## II

"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved!  
God's child with his dew

On thy gracious gold hair, and those  
lilies still living and blue

Just broken to twine round thy harp-  
strings, as if no wild heat

Were now raging to torture the desert!"

## III

Then I, as was meet,  
Knelt down to the God of my fathers,

and rose on my feet,  
And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder.

The tent was unlooped;  
I pulled up the spear that obstructed,

and under I stooped;  
Hands and knees on the slippery grass-

patch, all withered and gone,  
That extends to the second enclosure. I

groped my way on  
Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open.

Then once more I prayed,  
And opened the foldskirts and entered,

and was not afraid  
But spoke, "Here is David, thy ser-

vant!" And no voice replied.  
At the first I saw naught but the black-

ness: but soon I descried  
A something more black than the black-

ness—the vast, the upright  
Main prop which sustains the pavilion:

and slow into sight  
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and

blackest of all.  
Then a sunbeam, that burst through the

tent-roof, showed Saul.

## IV

He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both  
arms stretched out wide

On the great cross-support in the cen-  
tre, that goes to each side;

He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there  
as, caught in his pangs



And waiting his change, the king-serpent all heavily hangs,  
Far away from his kind, in the pine,  
till deliverance come  
With the spring-time,—so agonized Saul,  
drear and stark, blind and dumb.

## V

Then I tuned my harp,—took off the lilies we twine round its chords  
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noontide—those sunbeams like swords!  
And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one after one,  
So docile they come to the pen-door till folding be done.  
They are white and untorn by the bushes, for lo, they have fed  
Where the long grasses stifle the water within the stream's bed;  
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star follows star  
Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue and so far!

## VI

—Then the tune for which quails on the cornland will each leave his mate  
To fly after the player; then, what makes the crickets elate  
Till for boldness they fight one another; and then, what has weight  
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand house—  
There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and half mouse!  
God made all the creatures and gave them our love and our fear,  
To give sign, we and they are his children, one family here.

## VII

Then I played the help-tune of our reapers, their wine-song, when hand  
Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and great hearts expand  
And grow one in the sense of this world's life.—And then, the last song  
When the dead man is praised on his journey—"Bear, bear him along,  
With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets! Are balm seeds not here  
To console us? The land has none left such as he on the bier.  
Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother!"—And then, the glad chant  
Of the marriage,—first go the young maidens, next, she whom we vaunt

As the beauty, the pride of our dwelling.—And then, the great march  
Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress an arch  
Naught can break; who shall harm them, our friends? Then, the chorus intoned  
As the Levites go up to the altar in glory enthroned.  
But I stopped here: for here in the darkness Saul groaned.

## VIII

And I paused, held my breath in such silence, and listened apart;  
And the tent shook, for mighty Saul shuddered: and sparkles 'gan dart  
From the jewels that woke in his turban, at once, with a start,  
All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies courageous at heart.  
So the head: but the body still moved not, still hung there erect.  
And I bent once again to my playing, pursued it unchecked,  
As I sang:—

## IX

"Oh, our manhood's prime vigor!  
No spirit feels waste,  
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced.  
Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock,  
The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the cool silver shock  
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,  
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair,  
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold dust divine,  
And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught of wine,  
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes tell  
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well.  
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ  
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!  
Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword thou didst guard  
When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious reward?  
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as men sung  
The low song of the nearly-departed, and hear her faint tongue

Joining in while it could to the witness,  
 "Let one more attest,  
 I have lived, seen God's hand through a  
 lifetime, and all was for best?"  
 Then they sung through their tears in  
 strong triumph, not much, but the rest.  
 And thy brothers, the help and the con-  
 test, the working whence grew  
 Such result as, from seething grape-  
 bundles, the spirit strained true:  
 And the friends of thy boyhood—that  
 boyhood of wonder and hope,  
 Present promise and wealth of the future  
 beyond the eye's scope,—  
 Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch; a  
 people is thine;  
 And all gifts, which the world offers  
 singly, on one head combine!  
 On one head, all the beauty and strength,  
 love and rage (like the throe  
 That, a-work in the rock, helps its labor  
 and lets the gold go)  
 High ambition and deeds which surpass  
 it, fame crowning them,—all  
 Brought to blaze on the head of one  
 creature—King Saul!"

## X

And lo, with that leap of my spirit,—  
 heart, hand, harp and voice,  
 Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow,  
 each bidding rejoice  
 Saul's fame in the light it was made for  
 —as when, dare I say,  
 The Lord's army, in rapture of service,  
 strains through its array,  
 And upsoareth the cherubim-chariot—  
 "Saul!" cried I, and stopped,  
 And waited the thing that should follow.  
 Then Saul, who hung propped  
 By the tent's cross-support in the centre,  
 was struck by his name.  
 Have ye seen when Spring's arrowy  
 summons goes right to the aim,  
 And some mountain, the last to with-  
 stand her, that held (he alone,  
 While the vale laughed in freedom and  
 flowers) on a broad bust of stone  
 A year's snow bound about for a breast-  
 plate,—leaves grasp of the sheet?  
 Fold on fold all at once it crowds thun-  
 derously down to his feet.  
 And there fronts you, stark, black, but  
 alive yet, your mountain of old,  
 With his rents, the successive bequeath-  
 ing of ages untold—  
 Yea, each harm got in fighting your  
 battles, each furrow and scar

Of his head thrust 'twixt you and the  
 tempest—all hail, there they are!  
 —Now again to be softened with ver-  
 dure, again hold the nest  
 Of the dove, tempt the goat and its  
 young to the green on his crest  
 For their food in the ardors of summer.  
 One long shudder thrilled  
 All the tent till the very air tingled,  
 then sank and was stilled  
 At the King's self left standing before  
 me, released and aware.  
 What was gone, what remained? All  
 to traverse 'twixt hope and despair,  
 Death was past, life not come: so he  
 waited. Awhile his right hand  
 Held the brow, helped the eyes left too  
 vacant forthwith to remand  
 To their place what new objects should  
 enter: 't was Saul as before.  
 I looked up and dared gaze at those eyes,  
 nor was hurt any more  
 Than by slow pallid sunsets in autumn,  
 ye watch from the shore,  
 At their sad level gaze o'er the ocean—  
 a sun's slow decline  
 Over hills which, resolved in stern  
 silence, o'erlap and entwine  
 Base with base to knit strength more  
 intensely: so, arm folded arm  
 O'er the chest whose slow heavings sub-  
 sided.

## XI

What spell or what charm,  
 (For awhile there was trouble within  
 me), what next should I urge  
 To sustain him where song had restored  
 him?—Song filled to the verge  
 His cup with the wine of this life, press-  
 ing all that it yields  
 Of mere fruitage, the strength and the  
 beauty: beyond, on what fields,  
 Glean a vintage more potent and perfect  
 to brighten the eye  
 And bring blood to the lip, and com-  
 mend them the cup they put by?  
 He saith, "It is good;" still he drinks  
 not: he lets me praise life,  
 Gives assent, yet would die for his own  
 part.

## XII

Then fancies grew rife  
 Which had come long ago on the pas-  
 ture, when round me the sheep  
 Fed in silence—above, the one eagle  
 wheeled slow as in sleep;  
 And I lay in my hollow and mused on  
 the world that might lie

'Neath his ken, though I saw but the  
strip 'twixt the hill and the sky :  
And I laughed—"Since my days are  
ordained to be passed with my flocks,  
Let me people at least, with my fancies,  
the plains and the rocks,  
Dream the life I am never to mix with,  
and image the show  
Of mankind as they live in those fash-  
ions I hardly shall know !  
Schemes of life, its best rules and right  
uses, the courage that gains,  
And the prudence that keeps what men  
strive for." And now these old trains  
Of vague thought came again ; I grew  
surer ; so, once more the string  
Of my harp made response to my spirit,  
as thus—

## XIII

"Yea, my King,"

I began—"thou dost well in rejecting  
mere comforts that spring  
From the mere mortal life held in com-  
mon by man and by brute :  
In our flesh grows the branch of this  
life, in our soul it bears fruit.  
Thou hast marked the slow rise of the  
tree,—how its stem trembled first  
Till it passed the kid's lip, the stag's  
antler ; then safely outburst  
The fan-branches all round ; and thou  
mindest when these too, in turn,  
Broke a-bloom and the palm-tree seemed  
perfect : yet more was to learn,  
E'en the good that comes in with the  
palm-fruit. Our dates shall weslight,  
When their juice brings a cure for all  
sorrow ? or care for the plight  
Of the palm's self whose slow growth  
produced them ? Not so ! stem and  
branch  
Shall decay, nor be known in their place,  
while the palm-wine shall stanch  
Every wound of man's spirit in winter.  
I pour thee such wine,  
Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for !  
the spirit be thine !  
By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome  
thee, thou still shalt enjoy  
More indeed, than at first when incon-  
scious, the life of a boy.  
Crush that life, and behold its wine run-  
ning ! Each deed thou hast done  
Dies, revives, goes to work in the world !  
until e'en as the sun  
Looking down on the earth, though  
clouds spoil him, though tempests  
efface,

Can find nothing his own deed produced  
not, must everywhere trace  
The results of his past summer-prime,—  
so, each ray of thy will,  
Every flash of thy passion and prowess,  
long over, shall thrill  
Thy whole people, the countless, with  
ardor, till they too give forth  
A like cheer to their sons, who in turn,  
fill the South and the North  
With the radiance thy deed was the  
germ of. Carouse in the past !  
But the license of age has its limit ; thou  
diest at last :  
As the lion when age dims his eyeball,  
the rose at her height,  
So with man—so his power and his  
beauty forever take flight.  
No ! Again a long draught of my soul-  
wine ! Look forth o'er the years !  
Thou hast done now with eyes for the  
actual ; begin with the seer's !  
Is Saul dead ? In the depth of the vale  
make his tomb—bid arise  
A gray mountain of marble heaped four-  
square, till, built to the skies,  
Let it mark where the great First King  
slumbers : whose fame would ye know ?  
Up above see the rock's naked face,  
where the record shall go  
In great characters cut by the scribe.—  
Such was Saul, so he did ;  
With the sages directing the work, by  
the populace child,—  
For not half, they'll affirm, is comprised  
there ! Which fault to amend.  
In the grove with his kind grows the  
cedar, whereon they shall spend  
(See, in tablets 't is level before them  
their praise, and record  
With the gold of the graver, Saul's story,  
—the stateman's great word  
Side by side with the poet's sweet com-  
ment. The river's a-wave  
With smooth paper-reeds grazing each  
other when prophet-winds rave :  
So the pen gives unborn generations their  
due and their part  
In thy being ! Then, first of the mighty,  
thank God that thou art !"

## XIV

And behold while I sang . . . but O  
Thou who didst grant me that day,  
And before it not seldom hast granted  
thy help to essay,  
Carry on and complete an adventure,—  
my shield and my sword

In that act where my soul was thy servant,  
thy word was my word,—  
Still be with me, who then at the summit  
of human endeavor  
And scaling the highest, man's thought  
could, gazed hopeless as ever  
On the new stretch of heaven above me  
—till, mighty to save,  
Just one lift of thy hand cleared that  
distance—God's throne from man's  
grave!  
Let me tell out my tale to its ending—  
my voice to my heart  
Which can scare dare believe in what  
marvels last night I took part,  
As this morning I gather the fragments,  
alone with my sheep,  
And still fear lest the terrible glory  
evanish like sleep!  
For I wake in the gray dewy covert,  
while Hebron upheaves  
The dawn struggling with night on his  
shoulder, and Kidron retrieves  
Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine.

## XV

I say then,—my song  
While I sang thus, assuring the monarch,  
and ever more strong  
Made a proffer of good to console him—  
he slowly resumed  
His old motions and habitudes kingly.  
The right hand replumed  
His black locks to their wonted compos-  
ure, adjusted the swathes  
Of his turban, and see—the huge sweat  
that his countenance bathes.  
He wipes off with the robe; and he girds  
now his loins as of yore.  
And feels slow for the armlets of price,  
with the clasp set before.  
He is Saul, ye remember in glory,—ere  
error had bent  
The broad brow from the daily com-  
munion; and still, though much spent  
Be the life and the bearing that front  
you, the same, God did choose,  
To receive what a man may waste,  
desecrate, never quite lose.  
So sank he along by the tent-prop till,  
stayed by the pile  
Of his armor and war-cloak and gar-  
ments, he leaned there awhile,  
And sat out my singing,—one arm round  
the tent-prop, to raise  
His bent head, and the other hung slack  
—till I touched on the praise  
I foresaw from all men in all time, to the  
man patient there;

And thus ended, the harp falling for-  
ward. Then first I was ware  
That he sat, as I say, with my head just  
above his vast knees  
Which were thrust out on each side  
around me, like oak roots which please  
To encircle a lamb when it slumbers.  
I looked up to know  
If the best I could do had brought solace;  
he spoke not, but slow  
Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till  
he laid it with care  
Soft and grave, but in mild settled will,  
on my brow: through my hair  
The large fingers were pushed, and he  
bent back my head, with kind power—  
All my face back, intent to peruse it, as  
men do a flower.  
Thus held he me there with his great  
eyes that scrutinized mine—  
And oh, all my heart how it loved him!  
but where was the sign?  
I yearned—"Could I help thee, my  
father, inventing a bliss,  
I would add, to that life of the past, both  
the future and this;  
I would give thee new life altogether, as  
good, ages hence,  
As this moment,—had love but the war-  
rant, love's heart to dispense!"

## XVI

Then the truth came upon me. No harp  
more—no song more! outbreak—

## XVII

"I have gone the whole round of crea-  
tion: I saw and I spoke:  
I, a work of God's hand for that purpose,  
received in my brain  
And pronounced on the rest of his hand-  
work—returned him again  
His creation's approval or censure: I  
spoke as I saw:  
I report, as a man may of God's work—  
all's love, yet all's law.  
Now I lay down the judgeship he lent  
me. Each faculty tasked  
To perceive him, has gained an abyss,  
where a dewdrop was asked.  
Have I knowledge? confounded it  
shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.  
Have I forethought? how purblind, how  
blank to the Infinite Care!  
Do I task any faculty highest, to image  
success?  
I but open my eyes,—and perfection,  
no more and no less,

In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me,  
 and God is seen God  
 In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in  
 the soul and the clod.  
 And thus looking within and around me,  
 I ever renew  
 (With that stoop of the soul which in  
 bending upraises it too)  
 The submission of man's nothing-perfect  
 to God's all-complete,  
 As by each new obeisance in spirit, I  
 climb to his feet.  
 Yet with all this abounding experience,  
 this deity known,  
 I shall dare to discover some province,  
 some gift of my own.  
 There's a faculty pleasant to exercise,  
 hard to hoodwink,  
 I am fain to keep still in abeyance, (I  
 laugh as I think)  
 Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it,  
 wot ye, I worst  
 E'en the Giver in one gift.—Behold, I  
 could love if I durst!  
 But I sink the pretension as fearing a  
 man may o'ertake  
 God's own speed in the one way of love:  
 I abstain for love's sake.  
 —What, my soul? see thus far and  
 no farther? when doors great and  
 small,  
 Nine-and-ninety flew ope at our touch,  
 should the hundredth appall?  
 In the least things have faith, yet dis-  
 trust in the greatest of all?  
 Do I find love so full in my nature, God's  
 ultimate gift,  
 That I doubt his own love can com-  
 pete with it? Here, the parts shift?  
 Here, the creature surpass the Creator,—  
 the end, what Began?  
 Would I fain in my impotent yearning  
 do all for this man,  
 And dare doubt he alone shall not help  
 him, who yet alone can?  
 Would it ever have entered my mind,  
 the bare will, much less power.  
 To bestow on this Saul what I sang of,  
 the marvellous dower  
 Of the life he was gifted and filled with?  
 To make such a soul.  
 Such a body, and then such an earth  
 for insphering the whole?  
 And doth it not enter my mind (as my  
 warm tears attest)  
 These good things being given, to go on,  
 and give one more, the best?  
 Ay, to save and redeem and restore him,  
 maintain at the height

This perfection,—succeed with life's  
 day-spring, death's minute of night?  
 Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch  
 Saul the mistake,  
 Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now  
 —and bid him awake  
 From the dream, the probation, the pre-  
 lude, to find himself set  
 Clear and safe in new light and new life,  
 —a new harmony yet  
 To be run, and continued, and ended—  
 who knows?—or endure!  
 The man taught enough by life's dream,  
 of the rest to make sure;  
 By the pain-throb, triumphantly win-  
 ning intensified bliss,  
 And the next world's reward and repose,  
 by the struggles in this.

## XVIII

“I believe it! ’T is thou, God, that  
 givest, ’t is I who receive:  
 In the first is the last, in thy will is my  
 power to believe.  
 All's one gift: thou canst grant it more-  
 over, as prompt to my prayer  
 As I breathe out this breath, as I open  
 these arms to the air.  
 From thy will stream the worlds, life  
 and nature, thy dread Sabaoth:  
 I will?—the mere atoms despise me!  
 Why am I not loth  
 To look that, even that in the face too?  
 Why is it I dare  
 Think but lightly of such impuissance?  
 What stops my despair?  
 This:—’t is not what man Does which  
 exalts him, but what man Would do!  
 See the King—I would help him but can-  
 not, the wishes fall through.  
 Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow,  
 grow poor to enrich,  
 To fill up his life, starve my own out, I  
 would—knowing which,  
 I know that my service is perfect. Oh,  
 speak through me now!  
 Would I suffer for him that I love?  
 So wouldst thou—so wilt thou!  
 So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffa-  
 blest, uttermost crown—  
 And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor  
 leave up nor down  
 One spot for the creature to stand in! It  
 is by no breath,  
 Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salva-  
 tion joins issue with death!  
 As thy Love is discovered almighty,  
 almighty be proved

Thy power, that exists with and for it,  
 of being Beloved !  
 He who did most, shall bear most ; the  
 strongest shall stand the most weak.  
 'T is the weakness in strength, that I cry  
 for ! my flesh, that I seek  
 In the Godhead ! I seek and I find it. O  
 Saul, it shall be  
 A Face like my face that receives thee ;  
 a Man like to me,  
 Thou shalt love and be loved by, for-  
 ever : a Hand like this hand  
 Shall throw open the gates of new life  
 to thee ! See the Christ stand !"

## XIX

I know not too well how I found my way  
 home in the night.  
 There were witnesses, cohorts about me,  
 to left and to right,  
 Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen,  
 the alive, the aware :  
 I repressed, I got through them as  
 hardly, as strugglingly there,  
 As a runner beset by the populace  
 famished for news—  
 Life or death. The whole earth was  
 awakened, hell loosed with her crews ;  
 And the stars of night beat with emo-  
 tion, and tingled and shot  
 Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowl-  
 edge : but I fainted not,  
 For the Hand still impelled me at once  
 and supported, suppressed  
 All the tumult, and quenched it with  
 quiet, and holy behest,  
 Till the rapture was shut in itself, and  
 the earth sank to rest.  
 Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had  
 withered from earth—  
 Not so much, but I saw it die out in the  
 day's tender birth ;  
 In the gathered intensity brought to the  
 gray of the hills ;  
 In the shuddering forests' held breath ;  
 in the sudden wind-thrills ;  
 In the startled wild beasts that bore off,  
 each with eye sidling still  
 Though averted with wonder and dread ;  
 in the birds stiff and chill  
 That rose heavily, as I approached them,  
 made stupid with awe :  
 E'en the serpent that slid away silent,—  
 he felt the new law.  
 The same stared in the white humid  
 faces upturned by the flowers ;  
 The same worked in the heart of the  
 cedar and moved the vine-bowers :

And the little brooks witnessing mur-  
 mured, persistent and low,  
 With their obstinate, all but hushed  
 voices—"E'en so, it is so !"  
 1845. 1855.<sup>1</sup>

## A WOMAN'S LAST WORD

LET'S contend no more, Love,  
 Strive nor weep :  
 All be as before, Love,  
 —Only sleep !

What so wild as words are ?  
 I and thou  
 In debate, as birds are,  
 Hawk on bough !

See the creature stalking  
 While we speak !  
 Hush and hide the talking,  
 Cheek on cheek !

What so false as truth is,  
 False to thee ?  
 Where the serpent's tooth is  
 Shun the tree—

Where the apple reddens  
 Never pry—  
 Lest we lose our Edens,  
 Eve and I.

Be a god and hold me  
 With a charm !  
 Be a man and fold me  
 With thine arm !

Teach me, only teach, Love !  
 As I ought  
 I will speak thy speech, Love,  
 Think thy thought—

Meet, if thou require it,  
 Both demands,  
 Laying flesh and spirit  
 In thy hands.

That shall be to-morrow,  
 Not to-night.  
 I must bury sorrow  
 Out of sight :

—Must a little weep, Love,  
 (Foolish me !)  
 And so fall asleep, Love,  
 Loved by thee. 1855.

<sup>1</sup> The first part of the poem, up to Section X,  
 was published in *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics*,  
 1845 ; the complete poem, in *Men and Women*,  
 1855.

## EVELYN HOPE

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !

Sit and watch by her side an hour.

That is her book-shelf, this her bed ;

She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,

Beginning to die too, in the glass :

Little has yet been changed, I think :

The shutters are shut, no light may pass

Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died !

Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name ;

It was not her time to love ; beside,

Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,

And now was quiet, now astir,

Till God's hand beckoned unawares.—

And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope ?

What, your soul was pure and true,

The good stars met in your horoscope,

Made you of spirit, fire and dew—

And, just because I was thrice as old

And our paths in the world diverged so wide,

Each was naught to each, must I be told ?

We were fellow mortals, naught beside ?

No, indeed ! for God above

Is great to grant, as mighty to make,  
And creates the love to reward the love :

I claim you still, for my own love's sake !

Delayed it may be for more lives yet,

Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few :

Much is to learn, much to forget

Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come—at last it will,

When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)

In the lower earth, in the years long still,

That body and soul so pure and gay ?

Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,

And your mouth of your own geranium's red—

And what you would do with me, in fine,

In the new life come in the old life's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,

Given up myself so many times,

Gained me the gains of various men,

Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes ;

Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,

Either I missed or itself missed me :

And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !

What is the issue ? Let us see !

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while !

My heart seemed full as it could hold ;

There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,

And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.

So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep :

See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand !

There, that is our secret : go to sleep !

You will wake, and remember, and understand. 1855.

## LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening smiles

Miles and miles

On the solitary pastures where our sheep

Half-asleep

Tinkle homeward through the twilight.

stray or stop

As they crop—

Was the site once of a city great and gay,

(So they say)

Of our country's very capital, its prince

Ages since

Held his court in, gathered councils,

wielding far

Peace or war.

Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,

As you see,

To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills

From the hills

Intersect and give a name to, (else they run

Into one,)

Where the domed and daring palace  
 shot its spires  
 Up like fires  
 O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall  
 Bounding all,  
 Made of marble, men might march on  
 nor be pressed,  
 Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of  
 grass  
 Never was !  
 Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-  
 spreads

And embeds  
 Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,  
 Stock or stone—  
 Where a multitude of men breathed joy  
 and woe

Long ago ;  
 Lust of glory pricked their hearts up,  
 dread of shame  
 Struck them tame ;  
 And that glory and that shame alike,  
 the gold  
 Bought and sold.

Now,—the single little turret that re-  
 mains  
 On the plains,  
 By the caper overrooted, by the gourd  
 Overscored,  
 While the patching houseleek's head of  
 blossom winks  
 Through the chinks—  
 Marks the basement whence a tower in  
 ancient time  
 Sprang sublime,  
 And a burning ring, all round, the  
 chariots traced  
 As they raced.  
 And the monarch and his minions and  
 his dames  
 Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-col-  
 ored eve  
 Smiles to leave  
 To their folding, all our many-tinkling  
 fleece  
 In such peace,  
 And the slopes and rills in undistin-  
 guished gray  
 Melt away—  
 That a girl with eager eyes and yellow  
 hair  
 Waits me there  
 In the turret whence the charioteers  
 caught soul  
 For the goal,

When the king looked, where she looks  
 now, breathless, dumb  
 Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,  
 Far and wide,  
 All the mountains topped with temples,  
 all the grades  
 Colonnades,  
 All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—  
 and then,  
 All the men !  
 When I do come, she will speak not, she  
 will stand,  
 Either hand  
 On my shoulder, give her eyes the first  
 embrace  
 Of my face,  
 Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and  
 speech  
 Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters  
 forth  
 South and North,  
 And they built their gods a brazen pillar  
 high  
 As the sky,  
 Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full  
 force—  
 Gold, of course.  
 Oh heart ! oh blood that freezes, blood  
 that burns !  
 Earth's returns  
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and  
 sin !  
 Shut them in,  
 With their triumphs and their glories  
 and the rest !  
 Love is best. 1855.

#### UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON  
 OF QUALITY)

HAD I but plenty of money, money  
 enough and to spare,  
 The house for me no doubt, were a  
 house in the city-square ;  
 Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads  
 at the window there !

Something to see, by Bacchus, some-  
 thing to hear, at least !  
 There, the whole day long, one's life is a  
 perfect feast :  
 While up at a villa one lives, I maintain  
 it, no more than a beast.



Well now, look at our villa! stuck like  
the horn of a bull  
Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the  
creature's skull,  
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly  
a leaf to pull!  
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see  
if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square  
with the houses! Why,  
They are stone-faced, white as a curd,  
there's something to take the eye!  
Houses in four straight lines, not a single  
front awry;  
You watch who crosses and gossips, who  
saunters, who hurries by;  
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to  
draw when the sun gets high;  
And the shops with fanciful signs which  
are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over  
in March by rights,  
'T is May perhaps ere the snow shall  
have withered well off the heights:  
You've the brown ploughed land before,  
where the oxen steam and wheeze,  
And the hills over-smoked behind by the  
faint gray olive-trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've  
summer all at once;  
In a day he leaps complete with a few  
strong April suns.  
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat,  
scarce risen three fingers well,  
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows  
out its great red bell  
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the  
children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a  
fountain to spout and splash!  
In the shade it sings and springs: in the  
shine such foambows flash  
On the horses with curling fish-tails,  
that prance and paddle and pash  
Round the lady atop in her conch—fifty  
gazers do not abash,  
Though all that she wears is some weeds  
round her waist in a sort of sash.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to  
see though you linger,  
Except yon cypress that points like  
death's lean lifted forefinger.  
Some think fireflies pretty, when they  
mix i' the corn and mingle,

Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks  
of it seem a-tingle.  
Late August or early September, the  
stunning cicala is shrill,  
And the bees keep their tiresome whine  
round the resinous firs on the hill.  
Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the  
months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the  
blessed church-bells begin:  
No sooner the bells leave off than the  
diligence rattles in:  
You get the pick of the news, and it  
costs you never a pin.  
By and by there's the travelling doctor  
gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;  
Or the Fulcinello-trumpet breaks up the  
market beneath.  
At the post-office such a scene-picture—  
the new play, piping hot!  
And a notice how, only this morning,  
three liberal thieves were shot.  
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most  
fatherly of rebukes,  
And beneath, with his crown and his  
lion, some little new law of the  
Duke's!  
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the  
Reverend Don So-and-so,  
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint  
Jerome, and Cicero,  
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes  
rhyming,) "the skirts of Saint Paul  
has reached."  
Having preached us those six Lent-  
lectures more unctuous than ever he  
preached."  
Noon strikes,—here sweeps the proces-  
sion! our Lady borne smiling and  
smart  
With a pink gauze gown all spangles,  
and seven swords stuck in her heart!  
*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum.  
*tootle-te-tootle* the fife;  
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the  
greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear!  
fowls, wine, at double the rate.  
They have clapped a new tax upon salt,  
and what oil pays passing the gate  
It's a horror to think of. And so, the  
villa for me, not the city!

Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but  
still—ah, the pity, the pity!  
Look, two and two go the priests, then  
the monks with cowls and sandals,

And the penitents dressed in white  
shirts, a-holding the yellow candles ;  
One, he carries a flag up straight, and  
another across with handles,  
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear,  
for the better prevention of scandals :  
*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-  
te-tootle* the fife.  
Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no  
such pleasure in life ! 1855.

## A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

OH Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad  
to find !  
I can hardly misconceive you ; it would  
prove me deaf and blind ;  
But although I take your meaning, 'tis  
with such a heavy mind !

Here you come with your old music, and  
here 's all the good it brings.  
What, they lived once thus at Venice  
where the merchants were the kings,  
Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges  
used to wed the sea with rings ?

Ay, because the sea 's the street there ;  
and 't is arched by . . . what you call  
. . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it,  
where they kept the carnival :  
I was never out of England—it 's as if I  
saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure  
when the sea was warm in May ?  
Balls and masks begun at midnight,  
burning ever to mid-day,  
When they made up fresh adventures  
for the morrow, do you say ?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round  
and lips so red,—  
On her neck the small face buoyant,  
like a bell-flower on its bed,  
O'er the breast's superb abundance where  
a man might base his head ?

Well, and it was graceful of them—  
they 'd break talk off and afford  
—She, to bite her mask's black velvet—  
he, to finger on his sword.  
While you sat and played Toccatas,  
stately at the clavichord ?

What ? Those lesser thirds so plaintive,  
sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,  
Told them something ? Those suspen-  
sions, those solutions — " Must we  
die ? "

Those cominiserating sevenths—" Life  
might last ! we can but try ! "

" Were you happy ? "—" Yes. "—" And  
are you still as happy ? "—" Yes. And  
you ? "

—" Then, more kisses ! "—" Did I stop  
them, when a million seemed so  
few ? "

Hark, the dominant's persistence till it  
must be answered to !

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh,  
they praised you, I dare say !

" Brave Galuppi ! that was music ! good  
alike at grave and gay !

I can always leave off talking when I  
hear a master play ! "

Then they left you for their pleasure :  
till in due time, one by one,  
Some with lives that came to nothing,  
some with deeds as well undone,  
Death stepped tacitly and took them  
where they never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to  
take my stand nor swerve,  
While I triumph o'er a secret wrung  
from nature's close reserve,  
In you come with your cold music till I  
creep through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creak-  
ing where a house was burned :

" Dust and ashes, dead and done with,  
Venice spent what Venice earned.  
The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where  
a soul can be discerned.

" Yours for instance : you know physics,  
something of geology,  
Mathematics are your pastime ; souls  
shall rise in their degree ;  
Butterflies may dread extinction,—  
you 'll not die, it cannot be !

" As for Venice and her people, merely  
born to bloom and drop,  
Here on earth they bore their fruitage,  
mirth and folly were the crop :  
What of soul was left, I wonder, when  
the kissing had to stop ?

" Dust and ashes ! " So you creak it,  
and I want the heart to scold.

Dear dead women, with such hair, too  
—what's become of all the gold

Used to hang and brush their bosoms !  
I feel chilly and grown old. 1855.

## OLD PICTURES IN FLORENCE

THE morn when first it thunders in  
March,

The eel in the pond gives a leap, they  
say :

As I leaned and looked over the aloed  
arch

Of the villa-gate this warm March day,  
No flash snapped, no dumb thunder rolled  
In the valley beneath where, white  
and wide

And washed by the morning water gold,  
Florence lay out on the mountain-side.

River and bridge and street and square  
Lay mine, as much at my back and call,  
Through the live translucent bath of air,  
As the sights in a magic crystal ball.

And of all I saw and of all I praised,  
The most to praise and the best to see,  
Was the startling bell-tower Giotto  
raised :

But why did it more than startle me ?

Giotto, how, with that soul of yours,  
Could you play me false who loved you  
so ?

Some slights if a certain heart endures  
Yet it feels, I would have your fellows  
know !

I faith, I perceive not why I should care  
To break a silence that suits them best,  
But the thing grows somewhat hard to  
bear

When I find a Giotto join the rest.

On the arch where olives overhead  
Print the blue sky with twig and leaf,  
(That sharp-curved leaf which they  
never shed)

'Twixt the aloes, I used to lean in chief,  
And mark through the winter after-  
noons,

By a gift God grants me now and then,  
In the mild decline of those suns like  
moons,

Who walked in Florence, besides her  
men.

They might chirp and chaffer, come and  
go

For pleasure or profit, her men alive—  
My business was hardly with them, I  
trow,

But with empty cells of the human  
hive ;

—With the chapter-room, the cloister-  
porch,

The church's apsis, aisle or nave,  
Its crypt, one fingers along with a torch,  
Its face set full for the sun to shave.

Wherever a fresco peels and drops,  
Wherever an outline weakens and  
wanes

Till the latest life in the painting stops,  
Stands One whom each fainter pulse-  
tick pains :

One, wishful each scrap should clutch  
the brick,

Each tinge not wholly escape the  
plaster,

—A lion who dies of an ass's kick,  
The wronged great soul of an ancient  
Master.

For oh, this world and the wrong it does !  
They are safe in heaven with their  
backs to it.

The Michaels and Rafels, you hum and  
buzz

Round the works of, you of the little  
wit !

Do their eyes contract to the earth's old  
scope,

Now that they see God face to face,  
And have all attained to be poets, I hope !  
'T is their holiday now, in any case.

Much they reckon of your praise and you !  
But the wronged great souls—can they  
be quit

Of a world where their work is all to do,  
Where you style them, you of the little  
wit,

Old Master This and Early the Other,  
Not dreaming that Old and New are  
fellows :

A younger succeeds to an elder brother,  
Da Vincis derive in good time from  
Dellos.

And here where your praise might yield  
returns,

And a handsome word or two give  
help,

Here, after your kind, the mastiff gins  
And the puppy pack of poodles yelp.

What, not a word for Stefano there,  
Of brow once prominent and starry,

Called Nature's Ape, and the world's  
despair

For his peerless painting ? (See Vasari.)

There stands the Master. Study, my  
friends,

What a man's work comes to ! So he  
plans it,

Performs it, perfects it, makes amends  
 For the toiling and moiling, and then,  
*sic transit!*  
 Happier the thrifty blind-folk labor,  
 With upturned eye while the hand is  
 busy,  
 Not sidling a glance at the coin of their  
 neighbor!  
 'T is looking downward that makes one  
 dizzy.

"If you knew their work you would deal  
 your dole."  
 May I take upon me to instruct you?  
 When Greek Art ran and reached the  
 goal,  
 Thus much had the world to boast in  
*fructu*—  
 The Truth of Man, as by God first spoken,  
 Which the actual generations garble,  
 Was re-uttered, and Soul (which Limbs  
 betoken)  
 And Limbs (Soul informs) made new  
 in marble.

So you saw yourself as you wished you  
 were,  
 As you might have been, as you can-  
 not be;  
 Earth here, rebuked by Olympus there:  
 And grew content in your poor degree  
 With your little power, by those statues'  
 godhead,  
 And your little scope, by their eyes'  
 full sway,  
 And your little grace, by their grace  
 embodied  
 And your little date, by their forms  
 that stay.

You would fain be kinglier, say, than I  
 am?  
 Even so, you will not sit like Theseus,  
 You would prove a model? The Son of  
 Priam,  
 Has yet the advantage in arms' and  
 knees' use.  
 You're wroth—can you slay your snake  
 like Apollo?  
 You're grieved—still Niobe's the  
 grander!  
 You live—there's the Racers' frieze to  
 follow:  
 You die—there's the dying Alexander.

So, testing your weakness by their  
 strength,  
 Your meagre charms by their rounded  
 beauty,

Measured by Art in your breadth and  
 length,  
 You learned—to submit is a mortal's  
 duty.  
 —When I say "you" 'tis the common  
 soul,  
 The collective, I mean: the race of  
 Man  
 That receives life in parts to live in a  
 whole,  
 And grow here according to God's  
 clear plan.

Growth came when, looking your last  
 on them all,  
 You turned your eyes inwardly one  
 fine day  
 And cried with a start—What if we so  
 small  
 Be greater and grander the while than  
 they?  
 Are they perfect of lineament, perfect of  
 stature?  
 In both, of such lower types are we  
 Precisely because of our wider nature;  
 For time, theirs—ours, for eternity.

To-day's brief passion limits their range;  
 It seethes with the morrow for us and  
 more.  
 They are perfect—how else? they shall  
 never change:  
 We are faulty—why not? we have  
 time in store.  
 The Artificer's hand is not arrested  
 With us; we are rough-hewn, nowise  
 polished:  
 They stand for our copy, and once, in-  
 vested  
 With all they can teach, we shall see  
 them abolished.

'T is a life-long toil till our lump be  
 leaven—  
 The better! What's come to perfec-  
 tion perishes.  
 Things learned on earth, we shall practise  
 in heaven:  
 Works done least rapidly, Art most  
 cherishes.  
 Thyself shalt afford the example, Giotto!  
 Thy one work, not to decrease or dim-  
 inish,  
 Done at a stroke, was just (was it not?)  
 "O!"  
 Thy great Campanile is still to finish.

Is it true that we are now, and shall be  
 hereafter,

But what and where depend on life's  
minute?  
Hails heavenly cheer or infernal laughter  
Our first step out of the gulf or in it?  
Shall Man, such step within his endeavor,  
Man's face, have no more play and  
action  
Than joy which is crystallized forever,  
Or grief, an eternal petrification?

On which I conclude, that the early  
painters,  
To cries of "Greek Art and what more  
wish you?"—  
Replied, "To become now self-ac-  
quainters,  
And paint man, man, whatever the  
issue!  
Make new hopes shine through the flesh  
they fray,  
New fears aggrandize the rags and  
tatters:  
To bring the invisible full into play!  
Let the visible go to the dogs—what  
matters?"

Give these, I exhort you, their guerdon  
and glory  
For daring so much, before they well  
did it.  
The first of the new, in our race's story,  
Beats the last of the old; 't is no idle  
quiddit.  
The worthies began a revolution,  
Which if on earth you intend to ac-  
knowledge,  
Why, honor them now! (ends my allo-  
cution)  
Nor confer your degree when the folk  
leave college.

There's a fancy some lean to and others  
hate—  
That, when this life is ended, begins  
New work for the soul in another state,  
Where it strives and gets weary, loses  
and wins:  
Where the strong and the weak, this  
world's congeries,  
Repeat in large what they practised in  
small.  
Through life after life in unlimited  
series:  
Only the scale's to be changed, that's  
all.

Yet I hardly know. When a soul has  
seen  
By the means of Evil that Good is best,

And, through earth and its noise, what  
is heaven's serene,—  
When our faith in the same has stood  
the test—  
Why the child grown man, you burn the  
rod,  
The uses of labor are surely done;  
There remaineth a rest for the people of  
God:  
And I have had troubles enough, for  
one.

But at any rate I have loved the season  
Of Art's spring-birth so dim and dewy:  
My sculptor is Nicolo the Pisan,  
My painter—who but Cimabue?  
Nor ever was man of them all indeed,  
From these to Ghiberti and Ghirlan-  
dajo,  
Could say that he missed my critic-meed.  
So, now to my special grievance—  
heigh-ho!

Their ghosts still stand, as I said before,  
Watching each fresco flaked and  
rasped,  
Blocked up, knocked out, or white-  
washed o'er:  
—No getting again what the church  
has grasped!  
The works on the wall must take their  
chance;  
"Works never conceded to England's  
thick clime!"  
(I hope they prefer their inheritance  
Of a bucketful of Italian quick-lime.)

When they go at length, with such a  
shaking  
Of heads o'er the old delusion, sadly  
Each master his way through the black  
streets taking,  
Where many a lost work breathes  
though badly—  
Why don't they bethink them of who has  
merited?  
Why not reveal, while their pictures  
dree  
Such doom, how a captive might be out-  
ferreted?  
Why is it they never remember me?

Not that I expect the great Bigordi.  
Nor Sandro to hear me, chivalric, bellicose;  
Nor the wronged Lippino; and not a  
word I  
Say of a scrap of Frà Angelico's:  
But are you too fine, Taddeo Gaddi,

To grant me a taste of your intonaco,  
Some Jerome that seeks the heaven with  
a sad eye?

Not a churlish saint, Lorenzo Monaco?

Could not the ghost with the close red  
cap,

My Pollajolo, the twice a craftsman,  
Save me a sample, give me the hap  
Of a muscular Christ that shows the  
draughtsman?

No Virgin by him the somewhat petty.  
Of finical touch and tempera crumbly—  
Could not Alesso Baldovinetti  
Contribute so much, I ask him  
humbly?

Margheritone of Arezzo,  
With the grave-clothes garb and  
swaddling barret,

(Why purse up mouth and beak in a pet  
so,

You bald old saturnine poll-clawed  
parrot?)

Not a poor glimmering Crucifixion,  
Where in the foreground kneels the  
donor?

If such remain, as is my conviction,  
The hoarding it does you but little  
honor.

They pass; for them the panels may  
thrill,

The tempera grow alive and tinglish;  
Their pictures are left to the mercies  
still

Of dealers and stealers, Jews and the  
English,

Who, seeing mere money's worth in their  
prize,

Will sell it to somebody calm as Zeno  
At naked High Art, and in ecstasies  
Before some clay-cold vile Carlino!

No matter for these! But Giotto, you.  
Have you allowed, as the town-tongues  
babble it,—

Oh, never! it shall not be counted true—  
That a certain precious little tablet

Which Buonarrotti eyed like a lover—  
Was buried so long in oblivion's womb

And, left for another than I to discover,  
Turns up at last! and to whom? — to  
whom?

I, that have haunted the dim San  
Spirito,

(Or was it rather the Ognissanti?)

Patient on altar-step planting a weary  
toe!

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Nay, I shall have it yet! *Detur amanti!*  
My Koh-i-noor—or (if that 's a plati-  
tude)

Jewel of Giamschid, the Persian Sofi's  
eye;

So, in anticipative gratitude,

What if I take up my hope and pro-  
phesy?

When the hour grows ripe, and a certain  
dotard

Is pitched, no parcel that needs invoic-  
ing,

To the worse side of the Mont St. Gothard,  
We shall begin by way of rejoicing;  
None of that shooting the sky (blank  
cartridge),

Nor a civic guard, all plumes and  
lacquer,

Hunting Radetzky's soul like a partridge  
Over Morello with squib and cracker.

This time we 'll shoot better game and  
bag 'em hot—

No mere display at the stone of Dante  
But a kind of sober Witanagemot

(Ex: "Casa Guidi," *quod videas ante*;  
Shall ponder, once Freedom restored to  
Florence,

How Art may return that departed  
with her.

Go, hated house, go each trace of the  
Lorraine's,

And bring us the days of Orgagna  
hither!

How we shall prologuize, how we shall  
perorate,

Utter fit things upon art and history,  
Feel truth at blood-heat and falsehood at  
zero rate,

Make of the want of the age no  
mystery;

Contrast the fructuous and sterile eras,  
Show—monarchy ever its uncouth cub  
licks

Out of the bear's shape into Chimæra's,  
While Pure Art's birth is still the  
republic's.

Then one shall propose in a speech (curt  
Tuscan,

Expurgate and sober, with scarcely an  
"issimo.")

To end now our half-told tale of Cam-  
buscan,

And turn the bell-tower's *alt* to  
*altissimo*:

And fine as the beak of a young beccaccia  
The Campanile, the Duomo's fit ally,

Shall soar up in gold full fifty braccia,  
Completing Florence, as Florence  
Italy.

Shalt I be alive that morning the scaffold  
Is broken away, and the long-pent fire,  
Like the golden hope of the world, un-  
baffled

Springs from its sleep, and up goes the  
spire

While "God and the People" plain for  
its motto,

Thence the new tricolor flaps at the  
sky?

At least to foresee that glory of Giotto  
And Florence together, the first am I!  
1855.

#### "DE GUSTIBUS—"

YOUR ghost will walk, you lover of trees,  
(If our loves remain)

In an English lane,

By a cornfield-side a-flutter with poppies.

Hark, those two in the hazel coppice—

A boy and a girl, if the good fates please,

Making love, say,—

The happier they!

Draw yourself up from the light of the  
moon,

And let them pass, as they will too soon.

With the beanflowers' boon,

And the blackbird's tune,

And May, and June!

What I love best in all the world  
Is a castle, precipice-encurled,  
In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine.  
Or look for me, old fellow of mine,  
(If I get my head from out the mouth  
O' the grave, and loose my spirit's bands,  
And come again to the land of lands)—  
In a sea-side house to the farther South,  
Where the baked cicala dies of drouth,  
And one sharp tree—'t is a cypress—  
stands

By the many hundred years red-rusted,  
Rough iron-spiked, ripe fruit-o'ercrusted,  
My sentinel to guard the sands  
To the water's edge. For, what expands  
Before the house, but the great opaque  
Blue breadth of sea without a break?  
While, in the house, forever crumbles  
Some fragment of the frescoed walls,  
From blisters where a scorpion sprawls.  
A girl bare-footed brings, and tumbles  
Down on the pavement, green-flesh me-  
lons.

And says there 's news to-day—the king

Was shot at, touched in the liver-wing,  
Goes with his Bourbon arm in a sling,  
—She hopes they have not caught the  
felons.

Italy, my Italy!

Queen Mary's saying serves for me—

(When fortune's malice

Lost her, Calais)

Open my heart and you will see

Graved inside of it, "Italy."

Such lovers old are I and she:

So it always was, so shall ever be!

1855.

#### MY STAR

ALL that I know

Of a certain star

Is, it can throw

(Like the angled spar)

Now a dart of red,

Now a dart of blue;

Till my friends have said

They would fain see, too,

My star that dartles the red and the  
blue!

Then it stops like a bird; like a flower,  
hangs furled:

They must solace themselves with the  
Saturn above it.

What matter to me if their star is a  
world?

Mine has opened its soul to me; there-  
fore I love it.

1855.

#### ANY WIFE TO ANY HUSBAND

My love, this is the bitterest, that thou—  
Who art all truth, and who dost love me  
now

As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks  
to say—

Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love  
me still

A whole long life through, had but love  
its will,

Would death that leads me from thee  
brook delay;—

I have but to be by thee, and thy hand  
Will never let mine go, nor heart with-  
stand

The beating of my heart to reach its  
place.

When shall I look for thee and feel thee  
gone?

When cry for the old comfort and find  
none?

Never, I know! Thy soul is in thy face.

Oh, I should fade—'t is willed so ! Might  
 I save,  
 Gladly I would, whatever beauty gave  
 Joy to thy sense, for that was pre-  
 cious too.  
 It is not to be granted. But the soul  
 Whence the love comes, all ravage  
 leaves that whole ;  
 Vainly the flesh fades ; soul makes all  
 things new.

It would not be because my eye grew  
 dim  
 Thou couldst not find the love there,  
 thanks to Him  
 Who never is dishonored in the spark  
 He gave us from his fire of fires and  
 bade  
 Remember whence it sprang, nor be  
 afraid  
 While that burns on, though all the  
 rest grow dark.

So, how thou wouldst be perfect, white  
 and clean  
 Outside as inside, soul and soul's de-  
 mesne  
 Alike, this body given to show it by !  
 Oh, three-parts through the worst of  
 life's abyss,  
 What plaudits from the next world after  
 this,  
 Couldst thou repeat a stroke and gain  
 the sky !—

And is it not the bitterer to think  
 That disengage our hands and thou wilt  
 sink  
 Although thy love was love in very  
 deed ?  
 I know that nature ! Pass a festive day,  
 Thou dost not throw its relic-flower away  
 Nor bid its music's loitering echo  
 speed.

Thou let'st the stranger's glove lie where  
 it fell ;  
 If old things remain old things all is  
 well,  
 For thou art grateful as becomes man  
 best :  
 And hadst thou only heard me play one  
 tune,  
 Or viewed me from a window, not so  
 soon  
 With thee would such things fade as  
 with the rest.

I seem to see ! We meet and part ; 't is  
 brief ;

The book I opened keeps a folded leaf.  
 The very chair I sat on, breaks the  
 rank ;  
 That is a portrait of me on the wall—  
 Three lines, my face comes at so slight a  
 call :  
 And for all this, one little hour to  
 thank !

But now, because the hour through years  
 was fixed,  
 Because our inmost beings met and  
 mixed,  
 Because thou once hast loved me—wilt  
 thou dare  
 Say to thy soul and Who may list beside,  
 " Therefore she is immortally my bride ;  
 Chance cannot change my love, nor  
 time impair.

" So, what if in the dusk of life that's  
 left,  
 I, a tired traveller of my sun bereft.  
 Look from my path when, mimicking  
 the same,  
 The firefly glimpses past me, come and  
 gone ?  
 —Where was it till the sunset ? Where  
 anon  
 It will be at the sunrise ! What's to  
 blame ? "

Is it so helpful to thee ? Canst thou  
 take  
 The mimic up, nor, for the true thing's  
 sake,  
 Put gently by such efforts at a beam ?  
 Is the remainder of the way so long,  
 Thou need'st the little solace, thou the  
 strong ?  
 Watch out thy watch, let weak ones  
 doze and dream !

Ah, but the fresher faces ! " Is it true,"  
 Thou 'lt ask, " some eyes are beautiful  
 and new ?  
 Some hair,—how can one choose but  
 grasp such wealth ?  
 And if a man would press his lips to lips  
 Fresh as the wilding hedge-rose-cup  
 there slips  
 The dewdrop out of, must it be by  
 stealth ?

" It cannot change the love still kept  
 for Her.  
 More than if such a picture I prefer  
 Passing a day with, to a room's bare  
 side :



The painted form takes nothing she  
possessed,  
Yet, while the Titian's Venus lies at rest,  
A man looks. Once more, what is  
there to chide?"

So must I see, from where I sit and  
watch,  
My own self sell myself, my hand attach  
its warrant to the very thefts from  
me—  
Thy singleness of soul that made me  
proud,  
Thy purity of heart I loved aloud,  
Thy man's-truth I was bold to bid God  
see!

Love so, then, if thou wilt! Give all  
thou canst  
Away to the new faces—disentranced,  
(Say it and think it) obdurate no  
more;  
Re-issue looks and words from the old  
mint,  
Pass them afresh, no matter whose the  
print  
Image and superscription once they  
bore!

Re-coin thyself and give it them to  
spend,—  
It all comes to the same thing at the  
end,  
Since mine thou wast, mine art and  
mine shalt be,  
Faithful or faithless, sealing up the sum  
Or lavish of my treasure, thou must  
come  
Back to the heart's place here I keep  
for thee!

Only, why should it be with stain at all?  
Why must I, 'twixt the leaves of cor-  
onal,  
Put any kiss of pardon on thy brow?  
Why need the other women know so  
much,  
And talk together, "Such the look and  
such  
The smile he used to love with, then as  
now!"

Might I die last and show thee! Should  
I find  
Such hardship in the few years left  
behind,  
If free to take and light my lamp, and  
go  
Into thy tomb, and shut the door and sit,

Seeing thy face on those four sides of it  
The better that they are so blank, I  
know!

Why, time was what I wanted, to turn  
o'er  
Within my mind each look, get more  
and more  
By heart each word, too much to learn  
at first:  
And join thee all the fitter for the pass  
Neath the low doorway's lintel. That  
were cause  
For lingering, though thou calledst,  
if I durst!

And yet thou art the nobler of us two:  
What dare I dream of, that thou canst  
not do,  
Outstripping my ten small steps with  
one stride?  
I'll say then, here's a trial and a task—  
Is it to bear?—if easy, I'll not ask:  
Though love fail, I can trust on in thy  
pride.

Pride?—when those eyes forestall the  
life behind  
The death I have to go through!—when  
I find,  
Now that I want thy help most, all  
of thee!  
What did I fear? Thy love shall hold  
me fast  
Until the little minute's sleep is past  
And I wake saved.—And yet it will  
not be! 1855.

## TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA

I WONDER do you feel to-day  
As I have felt since, hand in hand,  
We sat down on the grass, to stray  
In spirit better through the land,  
This morn of Rome and May?

For me, I touched a thought, I know.  
Has tantalized me many times,  
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw  
Mocking across our path) for rhymes  
To catch at and let go.

Help me to hold it! First it left  
The yellowing fennel, run to seed  
There, branching from the brickwork's  
cleft,  
Some old tomb's ruin; yonder weed  
Took up the floating weft,

Where one small orange cup amassed  
Five beetles—blind and green they  
grobe  
Among the honey-meal: and last,  
Everywhere on the grassy slope  
I traced it. Hold it fast!

The champaign with its endless fleece  
Of feathery grasses everywhere!  
Silence and passion, joy and peace,  
An everlasting wash of air—  
Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life here, through such lengths of  
hours,  
Such miracles performed in play,  
Such primal naked forms of flowers,  
Such letting nature have her way,  
While heaven looks from its towers!

How say you? Let us, O my dove,  
Let us be unashamed of soul,  
As earth lies bare to heaven above!  
How is it under our control  
To love or not to love?

I would that you were all to me,  
You that are just so much, no more.  
Nor yours nor mine, nor slave nor free!  
Where does the fault lie? What the  
core  
O' the wound, since wound must be?

I would I could adopt your will,  
See with your eyes, and set my heart  
Beating by yours, and drink my fill  
At your soul's springs,—your part my  
part  
In life, for good and ill.

No, I yearn upward, touch you close,  
Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,  
Catch your soul's warmth,—I pluck the  
rose  
And love it more than tongue can  
speak—  
Then the good minute goes.

Already how am I so far  
Out of that minute? Must I go  
Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,  
Onward, whenever light winds blow,  
Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!  
Where is the thread now? Off again!  
The old trick! Only I discern—  
Infinite passion, and the pain  
Of finite hearts that yearn. 1855.

## MISCONCEPTIONS

THIS is a spray the Bird clung to,  
Making it blossom with pleasure,  
Ere the high tree-tops she sprung to,  
Fit for her nest and her treasure.  
Oh, what a hope beyond measure  
Was the poor spray's, which the flying  
feet hung to,—  
So to be singled out, built in, and sung  
to!

This is a heart the Queen leaned on,  
Thrilled in a minute erratic,  
Ere the true bosom she bent on,  
Meet for love's regal dalmatic.  
Oh, what a fancy ecstatic  
Was the poor heart's, ere the wanderer  
went on—  
Love to be saved for it, proffered to,  
spent on! 1855.

## ONE WAY OF LOVE

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves.  
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves  
And strew them where Pauline may  
pass.  
She will not turn aside? Alas!  
Let them lie. Suppose they die?  
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit  
These stubborn fingers to the lute!  
To-day I venture all I know.  
She will not hear my music? So!  
Break the string: fold music's wing:  
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.  
This hour my utmost art I prove  
And speak my passion—heaven or  
hell?  
She will not not give me heaven? 'T is  
well!  
Lose who may—I still can say,  
Those who win heaven, blest are they!  
1855.

## ANOTHER WAY OF LOVE

JUNE was not over  
Though past the full,  
And the best of her roses  
Had yet to blow,  
When a man I know  
(But shall not discover,  
Since ears are dull,  
And time discloses)

Turned him and said with a man's true  
 air,  
 Half sighing a smile in a yawn, as 't  
 were,—  
 "If I tire of your June, will she greatly  
 care?"

Well, dear, in-doors with you!  
 True! serene deadness  
 Tries a man's temper.  
 What's in the blossom  
 June wears on her bosom?  
 Can it clear scores with you?  
 Sweetness and redness,  
*Eadem semper!*  
 Go, let me care for it greatly or slightly!  
 If June mend her bower now, your hand  
 left unsightly  
 By plucking the roses,—my June will do  
 rightly.

And after, for pastime,  
 If June be refulgent  
 With flowers in completeness,  
 All petals, no prickles,  
 Delicious as trickles  
 Of wine poured at mass-time,—  
 And choose One indulgent  
 To redness and sweetness:  
 Or if, with experience of man and of  
 spider,  
 June use my June-lightning, the strong  
 insect-rider,  
 And stop the fresh film-work,—why,  
 June will consider. 1855.

#### RESPECTABILITY

DEAR, had the world in its caprice  
 Deigned to proclaim "I know you  
 both,  
 Have recognized your plighted troth,  
 Am sponsor for you: live in peace!"—  
 How many precious months and years  
 Of youth had passed, that speed so  
 fast.  
 Before we found it out at last,  
 The world, and what it fears!

How much of priceless life were spent  
 With men that every virtue decks,  
 And women models of their sex,  
 Society's true ornament,—  
 Ere we dared wander, nights like this,  
 Through wind and rain, and watch the  
 Seine,  
 And feel the Boulevard break again  
 To warmth and light and bliss!

I know! the world proscribes not love;  
 Allows my finger to caress  
 Your lips' contour and downiness,  
 Provided it supply a glove.  
 The world's good word!—the Institute!  
 Guizot receives Montalembert!  
 Eh? Down the court three lamps  
 flare:  
 Put forward your best foot! 1855.

#### LOVE IN A LIFE

Room after room,  
 I hunt the house through  
 We inhabit together.  
 Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou  
 shalt find her—  
 Next time, herself!—not the trouble be-  
 hind her  
 Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!  
 As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath  
 blossomed anew:  
 Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave  
 of her feather.

Yet the day wears,  
 And door succeeds door;  
 I try the fresh fortune—  
 Range the wide house from the wing to  
 the center.  
 Still the same chance! she goes out as I  
 enter.  
 Spend my whole day in the quest,—who  
 cares?  
 But 't is twilight, you see,—with such  
 suites to explore.  
 Such closets to search, such alcoves to  
 importune! 1855.

#### LIFE IN A LOVE

ESCAPE me?  
 Never—  
 Beloved!  
 While I am I, and you are you,  
 So long as the world contains us both,  
 Me the loving and you the loth,  
 While the one eludes, must the other  
 pursue.  
 My life is a fault at last, I fear:  
 It seems too much like a fate, indeed!  
 Though I do my best I shall scarce  
 succeed.  
 But what if I fail of my purpose here?  
 It is but to keep the nerves at strain,  
 To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,  
 And baffled, get up and begin again,—  
 So the chase takes up one's life, that's  
 all.

While, look but once from your farthest  
bound  
At me so deep in the dust and dark,  
No sooner the old hope goes to ground  
Than a new one, straight to the self-  
same mark,  
I shape me—  
Ever  
Removed! 1855.

## IN THREE DAYS

So, I shall see her in three days  
And just one night, but nights are short,  
Then two long hours, and that is morn.  
See how I come, unchanged, unworn!  
Feel, where my life broke off from thine,  
How fresh the splinters keep and fine,—  
Only a touch and we combine!

Too long, this time of year, the days!  
But nights, at least the nights are short.  
As night shows where her one moon is,  
A hand's-breadth of pure light and bliss,  
So life's night gives my lady birth  
And my eyes hold her! What is worth  
The rest of heaven, the rest of earth?

O loaded curls, release your store  
Of warmth and scent, as once before  
The tingling hair did, lights and darks  
Outbreaking into fairy sparks,  
When under curl and curl I pried  
After the warmth and scent inside,  
Through lights and darks how manifold—

The dark inspired, the light controlled!  
As early Art embrowns the gold.

What great fear, should one say, "Three  
days  
That change the world might change as  
well

Your fortune; and if joy delays,  
Be happy that no worse befell!"  
What small fear, if another says,  
"Three days and one short night beside  
May throw no shadow on your ways;  
But years must teem with change un-  
tried,

With chance not easily defied,  
With an end somewhere undescried."  
No fear!—or if a fear be born  
This minute, it dies out in scorn.  
Fear? I shall see her in three days  
And one night, now the nights are short,  
Then just two hours, and that is morn.  
1855.

## THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

## A PICTURE AT FANO

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou  
only leave  
That child, when thou hast done with  
him, for me!  
Let me sit all the day here, that when eve  
Shall find performed thy special minis-  
try,  
And time come for departure, thou, sus-  
pending  
Thy flight, may'st see another child for  
tending.  
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no  
more,  
From where thou standest now, to  
where I gaze,  
—And suddenly my head is covered o'er  
With those wings, white above the  
child who prays  
Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee  
guarding  
Me, out of all the world; for me, discard-  
ing  
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and  
opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy  
head  
Because the door opes, like that child,  
I know,  
For I should have thy gracious face in-  
stead,  
Thou bird of God! And wilt thou  
bend me low  
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands  
together,  
And lift them up to pray, and gently  
tether  
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy gar-  
ment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest  
My head beneath thine, while thy  
healing hands  
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy  
breast,  
Pressing the brain, which too much  
thought expands,  
Back to its proper size again, and smooth-  
ing  
Distortion down till every nerve had  
soothing,  
And all lay quiet, happy and sup-  
pressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired !

I think how I should view the earth and skies

And sea, when once again my brow was bared

After thy healing, with such different eyes.

O world, as God has made it ! All is beauty :

And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.

What further may be sought for or declared ?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach  
(Alfred, dear friend !)—that little child to pray,

Holding the little hands up, each to each  
Pressed gently,—with his own head turned away

Over the earth where so much lay before him

Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,

And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went

To sit and see him in his chapel there,  
And drink his beauty to our soul's content

—My angel with me too: and since I care

For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power

And glory comes this picture for a dower, [cent)—

Fraught with a pathos so magnifi-

And since he did not work thus earnestly  
At all times, and has else endured some wrong—

I took one thought his picture struck from me,

And spread it out, translating it to song.

My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend ?

How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end ?

This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.  
1855.

#### MEMORABILIA

AE, did you once see Shelley plain,  
And did he stop and speak to you,  
And did you speak to him again ?  
How strange it seems and new !

But you were living before that,  
And also you are living after ;  
And the memory I started at—  
My starting moves your laughter !

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own  
And a certain use in the world no doubt,

Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone  
'Mid the blank miles round about :

For there I picked up on the heather  
And there I put inside my breast  
A moulted feather, an eagle-feather !  
Well, I forget the rest. 1855.

#### POPULARITY

STAND still, true poet that you are !  
I know you ; let me try and draw you,  
Some night you 'll fail us : when afar  
You rise, remember one man saw you,  
Knew you, and named a star !

My star, God's glow-worm ! Why extend  
That loving hand of his which leads you,

Yet locks you safe from end to end  
Of this dark world, unless he needs you,

Just saves your light to spend ?

His clenched hand shall uncloze at last,  
I know, and let out all the beauty :  
My poet holds the future fast,  
Accepts the coming ages' duty,  
Their present for this past.

That day the earth's feast-master's brow  
Shall clear, to God the chalice raising :  
" Others give best at first, but thou  
Forever set'st our table praising.  
Keep'st the good wine till now ! "

Meantime, I 'll draw you as you stand.  
With few or none to watch and wonder :

I 'll say—a fisher, on the sand  
By Tyre the old, with ocean-plunder.  
A netful, brought to land.

Who has not heard how Tyrian shells  
Enclosed the blue, that dye of dyes  
Whereof one drop worked miracles,  
And colored like Astarte's eyes  
Raw silk the merchant sells ?

And each bystander of them all  
Could criticise, and quote tradition

How depths of blue sublimed some pall  
—To get which, pricked a king's am-  
bition;  
Worth sceptre, crown and ball.

Yet there 's the dye, in that rough mesh,  
The sea has only just o'er-whispered!  
Live whelks, each lip's beard dripping  
fresh,  
As if they still the water's lisp heard  
Through foam the rock-weeds thresh.

Enough to furnish Solomon  
Such hangings for his cedar-house,  
That, when gold-robed he took the  
throne  
In that abyss of blue, the Spouse  
Might swear his presence shone

Most like the centre-spike of gold  
Which burns deep in the bluebell's  
womb  
What time, with ardors manifold,  
The bee goes singing to her groom,  
Drunken and overbold.

Mere conches! not fit for warp or woof!  
Till cunning come to pound and  
squeeze  
And clarify,—refine to proof  
The liquor filtered by degrees,  
While the world stands aloof.

And there 's the extract, flasked and  
fine,  
And priced and salable at last!  
And Hobbs, Nobbs, Stokes and Nokes  
combine  
To paint the future from the past,  
Put blue into their line.

Hobbs hints blue,—straight he turtle  
eats:  
Nobbs prints blue,—claret crowns his  
cup:  
Nokes outdares Stokes in azure feats,—  
Both gorge. Who fished the murex  
up?  
What porridge had John Keats?<sup>1</sup>

1855.

## THE PATRIOT

## AN OLD STORY

It was roses, roses, all the way,  
With myrtle mixed in my path like  
mad:

<sup>1</sup> See Chesterton's *Life of Browning*, pp. 154-6.

The house-roofs seemed to heave and  
sway,  
The church-spires flamed, such flags  
they had,  
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,  
The old walls rocked with the crowd  
and cries.  
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise re-  
pels—  
But give me your sun from yonder  
skies!"  
They had answered, "And afterward,  
what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun  
To give it my loving friends to keep!  
Naught man could do, have I left un-  
done:  
And you see my harvest, what I reap  
This very day, now a year is run.

There 's nobody on the house-tops now—  
Just a palsied few at the windows set;  
For the best of the sight is, all allow,  
At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,  
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,  
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;  
And I think, by the feel, my forehead  
bleeds,  
For they fling, whoever has a mind,  
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!  
In triumphs, people have dropped  
down dead.  
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe  
Me?"—God might question; now in-  
stead,  
'T is God shall repay: I am safer so.

1855.

## A LIGHT WOMAN

So far as our story approaches the end,  
Which do you pity the most of us  
three?—  
My friend, or the mistress of my friend  
With her wanton eyes, or me?

My friend was already too good to lose,  
And seemed in the way of improve-  
ment yet,  
When she crossed his path with her  
hunting-noose,  
And over him drew her net.

When I saw him tangled in her toils,  
A shame, said I, if she adds just him  
To her nine-and-ninety other spoils,  
The hundredth for a whim!

And before my friend be wholly hers,  
How easy to prove to him, I said,  
An eagle's the game her pride prefers,  
Though she snaps at a wren instead!

So, I gave her eyes my own eyes to take,  
My hand sought hers as in earnest  
need,  
And round she turned for my noblesake,  
And gave me herself indeed.

The eagle am I, with my fame in the  
world.  
The wren is he, with his maiden face.  
—You look away and your lip is curled?  
Patience, a moment's space!

For see, my friend goes shaking and  
white;  
He eyes me as the basilisk:  
I have turned, it appears, his day to  
night,  
Eclipsing his sun's disk.

And I did it, he thinks, as a very thief:  
"Though I love her—that, he compre-  
hends—  
One should master one's passions, (love,  
in chief)  
And be loyal to one's friends!"

And she,—she lies in my hand as tame  
As a pear late basking over a wall;  
Just a touch to try and off it came;  
'T is mine,—can I let it fall?

With no mind to eat it, that 's the worst!  
Were it thrown in the road, would the  
case assist?  
'T was quenching a dozen blue-flies'  
thirst  
When I gave its stalk a twist.

And I,—what I seem to my friend, you  
see:  
What I soon shall seem to his love,  
you guess:  
What I seem to myself, do you ask of  
me?  
No hero, I confess.

'T is an awkward thing to play with  
souls,  
And matter enough to save one's own:

Yet think of my friend, and the burning  
coals  
He played with for bits of stone!

One likes to show the truth for the  
truth;  
That the woman was light is very  
true:  
But suppose she says,—Never mind that  
youth,  
What wrong have I done to you?

Well, anyhow, here the story stays,  
So far at least as I understand;  
And, Robert Browning, you writer of  
plays,  
Here 's a subject made to your hand!  
1855.

### THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I SAID—Then dearest, since 't is so,  
Since now at length my fate I know,  
Since nothing all my love avails,  
Since all, my life seemed meant for,  
fails,  
Since this was written and needs must  
be—  
My whole heart rises up to bless  
Your name in pride and thankfulness!  
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim  
Only a memory of the same,  
—And this beside, if you will not blame.  
Your leave for one more last ride with  
me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;  
Those deep dark eyes where pride de-  
murs  
When pity would be softening through,  
Fixed me a breathing-while or two  
With life or death in the balance:  
right!  
The blood replenished me again:  
My last thought was at least not vain:  
I and my mistress, side by side  
Shall be together, breathe and ride,  
So, one day more am I deified.  
Who knows but the world may end  
to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed  
By many benedictions—sun's  
And moon's and evening-star's at once—  
And so, you, looking and loving best.  
Conscious grew, your passion drew  
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
Down on you, near and yet more near,

Till flesh must fade for heaven was  
here!—  
Thus leant she and lingered—joy and  
fear!  
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul  
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped  
scroll  
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
Past hopes already lay behind.  
What need to strive with a life awry?  
Had I said that, had I done this?  
So might I gain, so might I miss.  
Might she have loved me? just as well  
She might have hated, who can tell!  
Where had I been now if the worst be-  
fell?

And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?  
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?  
We rode; it seemed, my spirit flew,  
Saw other regions, cities new,  
As the world rushed by on either side.  
I thought,—All labor, yet no less  
Bear up beneath their unsuccess,  
Look at the end of work, contrast  
The petty done, the undone vast,  
This present of theirs with the hopeful  
past!

I hoped she would love me; here we  
ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?  
What heart alike conceived and dared?  
What act proved all its thought had  
been?

What will but felt the fleshly screen?  
We ride and I see her bosom heave.  
There's many a crown for us who can  
reach.

Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!  
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
A soldier's doing! what atones?  
They scratch his name on the Abbey-  
stones.

My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,  
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell  
What we felt only; you expressed  
You hold things beautiful the best,  
And place them in rhyme so, side by  
side.

'Tis something, nay 't is much: but then,  
Have you yourself what's best for men?  
Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—  
Nearer one whit your own sublime

Than we who never have turned a  
rhyme?

Sing, riding's a joy. For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave  
A score of years to Art, her slave,  
And that's your Venus, whence we turn  
To yonder girl that fords the burn!

You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
What, man of music, you grown gray  
With notes and nothing else to say,  
Is this your sole praise from a friend,  
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
But in music we know how fashions  
end!"

I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate  
Proposed bliss here should sublimiate  
My being—had I signed the bond—  
Still one must lead some life beyond.

Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.  
This foot once planted on the goal,  
This glory-garland round my soul,  
Could I desecry such? Try and test!  
I sink back shuddering from the quest.  
Earth being so good, would heaven  
seem best?

Now, heaven and she are beyond this  
ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long!  
What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
At life's best, with our eyes upturned  
Whither life's flower is first discerned,

We, fixed so, ever should so abide?  
What if we still ride on, we two,  
With life forever old yet new,  
Changed not in kind but in degree,  
The instant made eternity,—  
And heaven just prove that I and she  
Ride, ride together, forever ride?

1855.

#### A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARN-  
ING IN EUROPE

LET us begin and carry up this corpse,  
Singing together.  
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar  
thorpes

Each in its tether  
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,  
Cared-for till cock-crow:

Look out if yonder be not day again  
Rimning the rock-row!  
That's the appropriate country; there,  
man's thought,



Rarer, intenser,  
 Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it  
 ought,  
 Chafes in the censer.  
 Leave we the unlettered plain its herd  
 and crop:  
 Seek we sepulture  
 On a tall mountain, citied to the top,  
 Crowded with culture!  
 All the peaks soar, but one the rest ex-  
 cels;  
 Clouds overcome it;  
 No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's  
 Circling its summit.  
 Thither our path lies; wind we up the  
 heights;  
 Wait ye the warning?  
 Our low life was the level's and the  
 night's;  
 He's for the morning.  
 Step to a tune, square chests, erect each  
 head,  
 'Ware the beholders!  
 This is our master, famous, calm and  
 dead,  
 Borne on our shoulders.  
  
 Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling  
 thorpe and croft,  
 Safe from the weather!  
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,  
 Singing together,  
 He was a man born with thy face and  
 throat.  
 Lyric Apollo!  
 Long he lived nameless: how should  
 Spring take note  
 Winter would follow?  
 Till lo, the little touch, and youth was  
 gone!  
 Cramped and diminished,  
 Moaned he, "New measures, other feet  
 anon!  
 My dance is finished?"  
 No, that's the world's way: (keep the  
 mountain-side,  
 Make for the city!)  
 He knew the signal, and stepped on with  
 pride  
 Over men's pity;  
 Left play for work, and grappled with  
 the world  
 Bent on escaping:  
 "What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou  
 keepest furled?  
 Show me their shaping,  
 Theirs who most studied man, the bard  
 and sage,—  
 Give!"—So, he gowned him,

Straight got by heart that book to its  
 last page:  
 Learned, we found him.  
 Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes  
 like lead,  
 Accents uncertain:  
 "Time to taste life," another would have  
 said,  
 "Up with the curtain!"  
 This man said rather, "Actual life comes  
 next?  
 Patience a moment!  
 Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed  
 text,  
 Still there's the comment.  
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or  
 least,  
 Painful or easy!  
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the  
 feast,  
 Ay, nor feel queasy."  
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,  
 When he had learned it.  
 When he had gathered all books had to  
 give!  
 Sooner, he spurned it.  
 Image the whole, then execute the  
 parts—  
 Fancy the fabric  
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire  
 from quartz.  
 Ere mortar dab brick!  
  
 (Here's the town-gate reached: there's  
 the market-place  
 Gaping before us.)  
 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace  
 (Hearten our chorus!)  
 That before living he'd learn how to  
 live—  
 No end to learning:  
 Earn the means first—God surely will  
 contrive  
 Use for our earning.  
 Others mistrust and say, "But time  
 escapes:  
 Live now or never!"  
 He said, "What's time? Leave Now for  
 dogs and apes!  
 Man has Forever."  
 Back to his book then: deeper drooped  
 his head:  
*Calculus* racked him:  
 Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of  
 lead:  
*Tussis* attacked him.  
 "Now, master, take a little rest!"—not  
 he!  
 (Caution redoubled,

Step two abreast, the way winds nar-  
rowly!)  
Not a whit troubled,  
Back to his studies, fresher than at first,  
Fierce as a dragon  
He (soul-hydrotic with a sacred thirst)  
Sucked at the flagon.  
Oh, if we draw a circle premature,  
Heedless of far gain,  
Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure  
Bad is our bargain!  
Was it not great? did not he throw on  
God,  
(He loves the burthen)—  
God's task to make the heavenly period  
Perfect the earthen?  
Did not he magnify the mind, show clear  
Just what it all meant?  
He would not discount life, as fools do  
here,  
Paid by instalment.  
He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's  
success  
Found, or earth's failure:  
"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He  
answered "Yes!  
Hence with life's pale lure!"  
That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
Sees it and does it:  
This high man, with a great thing to  
pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.  
That low man goes on adding one to one,  
His hundred's soon hit:  
This high man, aiming at a million,  
Misses an unit.  
That, has the world here—should he need  
the next,  
Let the world mind him!  
This, throws himself on God, and unper-  
plexed  
Seeking shall find him.  
So, with the throttling hands of death  
at strife.  
Ground he at grammar;  
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech  
were rife:  
While he could stammer  
He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!—  
Properly based *Oun*—  
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,  
Dead from the waist down.  
Well, here's the platform, here's the  
proper place:  
Hail to your purlieus,  
All ye highfliers of the feathered race,  
Swallows and curlews! [low  
Here's the top-peak; the multitude be-  
Live, for they can, there:

This man decided not to Live but Know—  
Bury this man there?  
Here—here's his place, where meteors  
shoot, clouds form,  
Lightnings are loosened,  
Stars come and go! Let joy break with  
the storm,  
Peace let the dew send!  
Lofty designs must close in like effects:  
Loftily lying,  
Leave him—still loftier than the world  
suspects,  
Living and dying. 1855.

## THE STATUE AND THE BUST

THERE'S a palace in Florence, the world  
knows well,  
And a statue watches it from the square.  
And this story of both do our townsmen  
tell.

Ages ago, a lady there,  
At the farthest window facing the East  
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal  
air!"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her  
ceased;  
She leaned forth, one on either hand;  
They saw how the blush of the bride in-  
creased—

They felt by its beats her heart expand—  
As one at each ear and both in a breath  
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdi-  
nand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,  
The Duke rode past in his idle way,  
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath.

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,  
Till he threw his head back—"Who is  
she?"

—"A bride the Riccardi brings home  
to-day."

Hair in heaps lay heavily  
Over a pale brow spirit-pure—  
Carved like the heart of the coal-black  
tree,

Crisped like a war steed's encolure—  
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes  
Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise  
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man,—  
The Duke grew straightway brave and  
wise.

He looked at her as a lover can ;  
She looked at him, as one who awakes :  
The past was a sleep, and her life began.

Now, love so ordered for both their  
sakes,  
A feast was held that selfsame night  
In the pile which the mighty shadow  
makes.

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,  
But the palace overshadows one,  
Because of a crime, which may God re-  
quite !

To Florence and God the wrong was  
done,  
Through the first republic's murder there  
By Cosimo and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the  
square)  
Turned in the midst of his multitude  
At the bright approach of the bridal  
pair.

Face to face the lovers stood  
A single minute and no more  
While the bridegroom bent as a man sub-  
dued—

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor—  
For the Duke on the lady a kiss con-  
ferred.

As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word ?  
If a word did pass, which I do not think,  
Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's  
brink  
He and his bride were alone at last  
In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast,  
That the door she had passed was shut  
on her  
Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir,  
Through a certain window facing the  
East  
She could watch like a convent's chroni-  
cler.

Since passing the door might lead to a  
feast,  
And a feast might lead to so much be-  
side,  
He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride—  
"Your window and its world suffice,"  
Replied the tongue, while the heart  
replied—

"If I spend the night with that devil  
twice,  
May his window serve as my loop of hell  
Whence a damned soul looks on para-  
dise !

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well,  
Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow  
Ere I count another ave-bell.

"T is only the coat of a page to borrow,  
And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim,  
And I save my soul—but not to-mor-  
row—"

(She checked herself and her eye grew  
dim)

"My father tarries to bless my state :  
I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait ?  
Moreover the Duke rides past, I know ;  
We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just  
so !

So we resolve on a thing and sleep :  
So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or  
cheap  
As the cost of this cup of bliss may  
prove  
To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,  
He beckoned the bridegroom (close on  
call,  
As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove)

And smiled "T was a very funeral,  
Your lady will think, this feast of  
ours,—  
A shame to efface whate'er befall !

"What if we break from the Arno bow-  
ers,  
And try if Petraja, cool and green,  
Cure last night's faults with this morn-  
ing's flowers?"

The bridegroom, not a thought to be  
seen  
On his steady brow and quiet mouth,  
Said, "Too much favor for me so mean !

"But alas! my lady leaves the South;  
Each wind that comes from the Apen-  
nine  
Is a menace to her tender youth:

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,  
If she quits her palace twice this year,  
To avert the flower of life's decline."

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly  
fear.  
Moreover Petraja is cold this spring;  
Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

And then to himself—"Which night  
shall bring  
Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool—  
Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!"

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor  
cool—  
For to-night the Envoy arrives from  
France  
Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my  
tool.

"I need thee still and might miss per-  
chance.  
To-day is not wholly lost, beside,  
With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride—what should I do but ride?  
And passing her palace, if I list,  
May glance at its window—well betide!"

So said, so done: nor the lady missed  
One ray that broke from the ardent  
brow,  
Nor a curl of the lips where the spirit  
kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,  
No morrow's sun should arise and set  
And leave them then as it left them  
now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,  
With still fresh cause to wait one day  
more  
Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore,  
With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,  
They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly.  
But not in despite of heaven and earth:  
The rose would blow when the storm  
passed by.

Meantime they could profit in winter's  
dearth  
By store of fruits that supplant the rose:  
The world and its ways have a certain  
worth:

And to press a point while these oppose  
Were simple policy; better wait:  
We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's  
fate,  
Who daily may ride and pass and look  
Where his lady watches behind the  
grate!

And she—she watched the square like a  
book  
Holding one picture and only one,  
Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book  
was done,  
And she turned from the picture at  
night to scheme  
Of tearing it out for herself next sun.

So weeks grew months, years; gleam by  
gleam  
The glory dropped from their youth and  
love,  
And both perceived they had dreamed a  
dream;

Which hovered as dreams do, still  
above:  
But who can take a dream for a truth?  
Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day as the lady saw her youth  
Depart, and the silver thread that  
streaked  
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's  
tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so  
peaked,—  
And wondered who the woman was,  
Hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass—  
"Summon here," she suddenly said,  
"Before the rest of my old self pass,

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,  
Who fashions the clay no love will  
change,  
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

" Let Robbia's craft so apt and strange  
Arrest the remains of young and fair,  
And rivet them while the seasons range.

" Make me a face on the window there,  
Waiting as ever, mute the while,  
My love to pass below in the square !

" And let me think that it may beguile  
Dreary days which the dead must spend  
Down in their darkness under the aisle,

" To say, ' What matters it at the end ?  
I did no more while my heart was warm  
Than does that image, my pale-faced  
friend.'

' Where is the use of the lip's red  
charm,  
The heaven of hair, the pride of the  
brow,  
And the blood that blues the inside  
arm—

" Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,  
The earthly gift to an end divine ?  
A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,  
With flowers and fruits which leaves en-  
lace,  
Was set where now is the empty shrine—

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space,  
As a ghost might lean from a chink of  
sky,  
The passionate pale lady's face—

Eying ever, with earnest eye  
And quick-turned neck at its breathless  
stretch,  
Some one who ever is passing by—)

The duke had sighed like the simplest  
wretch  
In Florence, " Youth—my dream es-  
capes !  
Will its record stay ?" And he bade  
them fetch

Some subtle moulder of brazen shapes—  
" Can the soul, the will, die out of a  
man  
Ere his body find the grave that gapes ?

" John of Donay shall effect my plan,  
Set me on horseback here aloft,  
Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

" In the very square I have crossed so  
oft :  
That men may admire, when future suns  
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

" While the mouth and the brow stay  
brave in bronze—  
Admire and say, ' When he was alive  
How he would take his pleasure once !'

" And it shall go hard but I contrive  
To listen the while, and laugh in my  
tomb  
At idleness which aspires to strive."

So ! While these wait the trump of  
doom,  
How do their spirits pass, I wonder,  
Nights and days in the narrow room ?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder  
What a gift life was, ages ago,  
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know,  
Nor all that chivalry of his,  
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss—  
Since, the end of life being manifest,  
He had burned his way through the  
world to this.

I hear you reproach, " But delay was  
best,  
For their end was a crime."—Oh, a crime  
will do  
As well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,  
Sufficient to vindicate itself  
And prove its worth at a moment's  
view !

Must a game be played for the sake of  
pelf ?  
Where a button goes, 't were an epigram  
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.

The true has no value beyond the sham ;  
As well the counter as coin, I submit,  
When your table's a hat, and your prize,  
a dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,  
Venture as warily, use the same skill,  
Do your best, whether winning or losing  
it,

If you choose to play !—is my principle.  
Let a man contend to the uttermost  
For his life's set prize, be it what it will !

The counter our lovers staked was lost  
As surely as if it were lawful coin :  
And the sin I impute to each frustrate  
ghost

Is—the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,  
Though the end in sight was a vice, I  
say.  
You of the virtue (we issue join)  
How strive you? *De te, fabula!*

1855.

# “CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME”

See Edgar's song in *Lear*.

My first thought was, he lied in every  
word,  
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye  
Askance to watch the working of his  
lie  
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford  
Suppression of the glee, that pursed and  
scored  
Its edge, at one more victim gained  
thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his  
staff?  
What, save to waylay with his lies,  
ensnare  
All travellers who might find him  
posted there,  
And ask the road? I guessed what  
skull-like laugh  
Would break, what crutch 'gin write  
my epitaph  
For pastime in the dusty thorough-  
fare,

If at his counsel I should turn aside  
Into that ominous tract which, all  
agree,  
Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquies-  
cingly  
I did turn as he pointed: neither pride  
Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,  
So much as gladness that some end  
might be.

For, what with my whole world-wide  
wandering,  
What with my search drawn out  
through years, my hope  
Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope

41

With that obstreperous joy success  
would bring,—  
I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring  
My heart made, finding failure in its  
scope.

As when a sick man very near to death  
Seems dead indeed, and feels begin  
and end  
The tears, and takes the farewell of each  
friend,  
And hears one bid the other go, draw  
breath  
Freelier outside, (“since all is o'er,” he  
saith,  
“And the blow fallen no grieving can  
amend;”)

While some discuss if near the other  
graves  
Be room enough for this, and when a  
day  
Suits best for carrying the corpse away,  
With care about the banners, scarves  
and staves:  
And still the man hears all, and only  
craves  
He may not shame such tender love  
and stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,  
Heard failure prophesied so oft, been  
writ  
So many times among “The Band”—  
to wit,  
The knights who to the Dark Tower's  
search addressed  
Their steps—that just to fail as they,  
seemed best,  
And all the doubt was now—should I  
be fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,  
That hateful cripple, out of his high-  
way  
Into the path he pointed. All the day  
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim  
Was settling to its close, yet shot one  
grim  
Red leer to see the plain catch its  
estray.

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found  
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or  
two,  
Than, pausing to throw backward a  
last view  
O'er the safe road, 't was gone; gray  
plain all round:

Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.  
I might go on; naught else remained  
to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw  
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing  
throve:

For flowers—as well expect a cedar  
grove!

But cockle, spurge, according to their  
law

Might propagate their kind, with none  
to awe.

You'd think: a burr had been a treas-  
ure trove.

No! penury, inertness and grimace,  
In some strange sort, were the land's  
portion. "See

Or shut your eyes," said Nature peev-  
ishly.

"It nothing skills: I cannot help my  
case:

'T is the Last Judgment's fire must cure  
this place.

Calcine its clods and set my prisoners  
free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk  
Above its mates, the head was chop-  
ped; the bents

Were jealous else. What made those  
holes and rents

In the dock's harsh swarth leaves,  
bruised as to balk

All hope of greenness? 't is a brute  
must walk

Pashing their life out, with a brute's  
intents.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair  
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked  
the mud

Which underneath looked kneaded up  
with blood.

One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-  
stare,

Stood stupefied, however he came there:  
Thrust out past service from the  
devil's stud!

Alive? he might be dead for aught I  
know,

With that red gaunt and colloped neck  
a-strain,

And shut eyes underneath the rusty  
mane;

Seldom went such grotesqueness with  
such woe;

I never saw a brute I hated so;  
He must be wicked to deserve such  
pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my  
heart.

As a man calls for wine before he  
fights,

I asked one draught of earlier, happier  
sights,

Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.  
Think first, fight afterwards—the sol-  
dier's art:

One taste of the old time sets all to  
rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening  
face

Beneath its garniture of curly gold,  
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold

An arm in mine to fix me to the place.  
That way he used. Alas, one night's  
disgrace!

Out went my heart's new fire and left  
it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor—there he  
stands

Frank as ten years ago when knighted  
first.

What honest man should dare (he  
said) he durst.

Good—but the scene shifts—faugh!  
what hangman hands

Pin to his breast a parchment? His  
own bands

Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and  
curst!

Better this present than a past like that;  
Back therefore to my darkening path

again!  
No sound, no sight as far as eye could  
strain.

Will the night send a howlet or a bat?  
I asked: when something on the dismal  
flat

Came to arrest my thoughts and  
change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path  
As unexpected as a serpent comes.

No sluggish tide congenial to the  
glooms;

This, as it frothed by, might have been a  
bath

For the fiend's glowing hoof—to see the  
wrath

Of its black eddy bespate with flakes  
and spumes.

So petty, yet so spiteful! All along,  
 Low scrubby alders kneeled down  
 over it;  
 Drenched willows flung them head-  
 long in a fit  
 Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:  
 The river which had done them all the  
 wrong,  
 Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred  
 no whit.

Which, while I forded,—good saints,  
 how I feared  
 To set my foot upon a dead man's  
 cheek,  
 Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to  
 seek  
 For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!  
 —It may have been a water-rat I speared,  
 But, ugh, it sounded like a baby's  
 shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other  
 bank.  
 Now for a better country. Vain  
 presage!  
 Who were the strugglers, what war  
 did they wage,  
 Whose savage trample thus could pad  
 the dank  
 Soil to a splash? Toads in a poisoned  
 tank,  
 Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage—

The fight must so have seemed in that  
 fell cirque.  
 What penned them there, with all the  
 plain to choose?  
 No footprint leading to that horrid  
 mews,  
 None out of it. Mad brewage set to  
 work  
 Their brains, no doubt, like galley-  
 slaves the Turk  
 Pits for his pastime, Christians against  
 Jews.

And more than that—a furlong on—  
 why, there!  
 What bad use was that engine for,  
 that wheel,  
 Or brake, not wheel—that harrow fit  
 to reel [air  
 Men's bodies out like silk? with all the  
 Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware.  
 Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth  
 of steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground,  
 once a wood,

Next a marsh, it would seem, and now  
 mere earth  
 Desperate and done with: (so a fool  
 finds mirth,  
 Makes a thing and then mars it, till his  
 mood  
 Changes and off he goes!) within a rood—  
 Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark  
 black dearth.

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and  
 grim,  
 Now patches where some leanness of  
 the soil's  
 Broke into moss or substances like  
 boils;  
 Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in  
 him  
 Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim  
 Gaping at death, and dies while it  
 recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end!  
 Naught in the distance but the even-  
 ing, naught  
 To point my footstep further! At  
 the thought,  
 A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom-  
 friend,  
 Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing  
 dragon-penned  
 That brushed my cap—perchance the  
 guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,  
 'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given  
 place  
 All round to mountains—with such  
 name to grace  
 Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen  
 in view.  
 How thus they had surprised me,—  
 solve it, you!  
 How to get from them was no clearer  
 case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some  
 trick  
 Of mischief happened to me, God  
 knows when—  
 In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended,  
 then, [nick  
 Progress this way. When, in the very  
 Of giving up, one time more, came a  
 click [the den!  
 As when a trap shuts—you're inside

Burningly it came on me all at once,  
 This was the place! those two hills on  
 the right,



Crouched like two bulls locked horn  
in horn in fight;  
While to the left, a tall scalped mountain  
. . . Dunce,  
Dotard, a-doing at the very nonce,  
After a life spent training for the  
sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower  
itself?  
The round squat turret, blind as the  
fool's heart,  
Built of brown stone, without a coun-  
terpart  
In the whole world. The tempest's  
mocking elf  
Points to the shipman thus the unseen  
shelf  
He strikes on, only when the timbers  
start.

Not see? because of night perhaps?—  
why, day  
Came back again for that! before it  
left  
The dying sunset kindled through a  
cleft:  
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,  
Chin upon hand, to see the game at  
bay,—  
“Now stab and end the creature—to  
the heft!”

Not hear? when noise was everywhere!  
it tolled  
Increasing like a bell. Names in my  
ears,  
Of all the lost adventurers my peers,—  
How such a one was strong, and such  
was bold,  
And such was fortunate, yet each of old  
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the  
woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hill-  
sides, met  
To view the last of me, a living frame  
For one more picture! in a sheet of  
flame  
I saw them and I knew them all. And  
yet  
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,  
And blew: “*Childe Roland to the  
Dark Tower came.*” 1855.

FRA LIPPO LIPPI

I AM poor brother Lippo, by your leave!  
You need not clap your torches to my  
face.

Zooks, what 's to blame? you think you  
see a monk!

What, 't is past midnight, and you go  
the rounds,

And here you catch me at an alley's end  
Where sportive ladies leave their doors  
ajar?

The Carmine's my cloister: hunt it up,  
Do,—harry out, if you must show your  
zeal,

Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong  
hole,

And nip each softling of a wee white  
mouse,

*Weke, weke*, that 's crept to keep him  
company!

Aha, you know your betters! Then,  
you 'll take

Your hand away that 's fiddling on my  
throat,

And please to know me likewise. Who  
am I?

Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a  
friend

Three streets off—he's a certain . . . how  
d' ye call?

Master—a . . . Cosimo of the Medici.

I' the house that caps the corner. Boh!  
you were best!

Remember and tell me, the day you're  
hanged,

How you affected such a gullet's-gripe!

But you, sir, it concerns you that your  
knaves

Pick up a manner nor discredit you:

Zooks, are we pilchards, that they sweep  
the streets

And count fair prize what comes into  
their net?

He 's Judas to a tittle, that man is!

Just such a face! Why, sir, you make  
amends.

Lord, I 'm not angry! Bid your hang-  
dogs go

Drink out this quarter-florin to the  
health

Of the munificent House that harbors  
me

(And many more beside, lads! more  
beside!)

And all 's come square again. I 'd like  
his face—

His, elbowing on his comrade in this  
door

With the pike and lantern,—for the  
slave that holds

John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair

With one hand (“Look you, now,” as  
who should say)

And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped !  
 It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk,  
 A wood-coal or the like? or you should see !  
 Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.  
 What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down  
 You know them and they take you? like enough !  
 I saw the proper twinkle in your eye—  
 Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.  
 Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to haunch.  
 Here's spring come, and the nights one makes up bands  
 To roam the town and sing our carnival.  
 And I've been three weeks shut within my mew,  
 A-painting for the great man, saints and saints  
 And saints again. I could not paint all night—  
 Ouf ! I leaned out of window for fresh air.  
 There came a hurry of feet and little feet,  
 A sweep of lute strings, laughs, and whiffs of song,—  
*Flower o' the broom,*  
*Take away love, and our earth is a tomb !*  
*Flower o' the quince,*  
*I let Lisa go, and what good in life since ?*  
*Flower o' the thyme*—and so on. Round they went.  
 Scarce had they turned the corner when a titter  
 Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight.—three slim shapes,  
 And a face that looked up . . . zooks, sir, flesh and blood,  
 That's all I'm made of ! Into shreds it went,  
 Curtain and counterpane and coverlet,  
 All the bed-furniture—a dozen knots.  
 There was a ladder ! Down I let myself,  
 Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and so dropped.  
 And after them. I came up with the fun  
 Hard by Saint Laurence, hail fellow, well met.—  
*Flower o' the rose,*  
*If I've been merry, what matter who knows ?*  
 And so as I was stealing back again  
 To get to bed and have a bit of sleep

Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work  
 On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast  
 With his great round stone to subdue the flesh,  
 You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see !  
 Though your eye twinkles still, you shake your head—  
 Mine's shaved—a monk, you say—the sting's in that !  
 If Master Cosimo announced himself,  
 Mum's the word naturally ; but a monk !  
 Come, what am I a beast for ? tell us, now !  
 I was a baby when my mother died  
 And father died and left me in the street.  
 I starved there, God knows how, a year or two  
 On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and shucks,  
 Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day,  
 My stomach being empty as your hat,  
 The wind doubled me up and down I went.  
 Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one hand,  
 (Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)  
 And so along the wall, over the bridge,  
 By the straight cut to the convent. Six words there,  
 While I stood munching my first bread that month :  
 " So, boy, you're minded," quoth the good fat father,  
 Wiping his own mouth, 't was refection-time.—  
 " To quit this very miserable world ?  
 Will you renounce " . . . " the mouthful of bread ? " thought I ;  
 By no means ! Brief, they made a monk of me ;  
 I did renounce the world, its pride and greed,  
 Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-house,  
 Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici  
 Have given their hearts to—all at eight years old.  
 Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure,  
 'T was not for nothing—the good bellyful,  
 The warm serge and the rope that goes all round,  
 And day-long blessed idleness beside !  
 " Let's see what the urchin's fit for "  
 —that came next.  
 Not overmuch their way, I must confess.

Such a to-do ! They tried me with their books ;  
 Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in pure waste !  
*Flower o' the clove,*  
*All the Latin I construe is " amo," I love !*  
 But, mind you, when a boy starves in the streets  
 Eight years together, as my fortune was,  
 Watching folk's faces to know who will fling  
 The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he desires,  
 And who will curse or kick him for his pains,—  
 Which gentleman processional and fine,  
 Holding a candle to the Sacrament,  
 Will wink and let him lift a plate and catch  
 The droppings of the wax to sell again,  
 Or holla for the Eight and have him whipped,—  
 How say I?—nay, which dog bites,  
 which lets drop  
 His bone from the heap of offal in the street,—  
 Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp alike,  
 He learns the look of things, and none the less  
 For admonition from the hunger-pinch.  
 I had a store of such remarks, be sure,  
 Which, after I found leisure, turned to use.  
 I drew men's faces on my copy-books,  
 Scrawled them within the antiphony's marge,  
 Joined legs and arms to the long music-notes,  
 Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and B's,  
 And made a string of pictures of the world  
 Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun,  
 On the wall, the bench, the door. The monks looked black.  
 "Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out, d'ye say ?"  
 In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a lark.  
 What if at last we get our man of parts,  
 We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese  
 And Preaching Friars, to do our church up fine  
 And put the front on it that ought to be !"  
 And hereupon he bade me daub away.

Thank you ! my head being crammed,  
 the walls a blank,  
 Never was such prompt disembodying.  
 First, every sort of monk, the black and white,  
 I drew them, fat and lean : then, folk at church,  
 From good old gossips waiting to confess  
 Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-ends,—  
 To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot,  
 Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting there  
 With the little children round him in a row  
 Of admiration, half for his beard and half  
 For that white anger of his victim's son  
 Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm,  
 Signing himself with the other because of Christ  
 (Whose sad face on the cross sees only this  
 After the passion of a thousand years)  
 Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head,  
 (Which the intense eyes looked through) came at eve  
 On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf,  
 Her pair of earrings and a bunch of flowers  
 (The brute took growling), prayed, and so was gone.  
 I painted all, then cried " 'T is ask and have ;  
 Choose, for more's ready !"—laid the ladder flat,  
 And showed my covered bit of cloister-wall,  
 The monks closed in a circle and praised loud  
 Till checked, taught what to see and not to see,  
 Being simple bodies,—"That's the very man !  
 Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog !  
 That woman's like the Prior's niece who comes  
 To care about his asthma : it's the life !"  
 But there my triumph's straw-fire flared and fumed ;  
 Their betters took their turn to see and say :  
 The Prior and the learned pulled a face  
 And stopped all that in no time. "How ?  
 what's here ? [us all !  
 Quite from the mark of painting, bless

Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true  
 As much as pea and pea! it's devil's-game!  
 Your business is not to catch men with show,  
 With homage to the perishable clay,  
 But lift them over it, ignore it all,  
 Make them forget there's such a thing as flesh.  
 Your business is to paint the souls of men—  
 Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke . . .  
     no, it's not . . .  
 It's vapor done up like a new-born babe—  
 (In that shape when you die it leaves your mouth)  
 It's . . . well, what matters talking,  
     it's the soul!  
 Give us no more of body than shows soul!  
 Here's Giotto, with his Saint a-praising God,  
 That sets us praising,—why not stop with him?  
 Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head  
 With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?  
 Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!  
 Rub all out, try at it a second time.  
 Oh, that white smallish female with the breasts,  
 She's just my niece . . . Herodias, I would say,—  
 Who went and danced and got men's heads cut off!  
 Have it all out!" Now, is this sense, I ask?  
 A fine way to paint soul, by painting body  
 So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go further  
 And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow does for white  
 When what you put for yellow's simply black,  
 And any sort of meaning looks intense  
 When all beside itself means and looks naught.  
 Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,  
 Left foot and right foot, go a double step.  
 Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,  
     [face,  
 Both in their order? Take the prettiest

The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint—is it so pretty  
 You can't discover if it means hope, fear,  
 Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with these?  
 Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,  
 Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash.  
 And then add soul and heighten them three-fold?  
 Or say there's beauty with no soul at all—  
 (I never saw it—put the case the same—)  
 If you get simple beauty and naught else,  
 You get about the best thing God invents:  
 That's somewhat: and you'll find the soul you have missed,  
 Within yourself, when you return him thanks.  
 "Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my life, in short,  
 And so the thing has gone on ever since.  
 I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken bounds:  
 You should not take a fellow eight years old  
 And make him swear to never kiss the girls.  
 I'm my own master, paint now as I please—  
 Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-house!  
 Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front—  
 Those great rings serve more purposes than just  
 To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse!  
 And yet the old schooling sticks, the old grave eyes  
 Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,  
 The heads shake still—"It's art's decline, my son!  
 You're not of the true painters, great and old;  
 Brother Angelico's the man, you'll find;  
 Brother Lorenzo stands his single peer:  
 Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the third!"  
*Flower o' the pine.*  
*You keep your mistr . . . manners, and I'll stick to mine!*  
 I'm not the third, then: bless us, they must know!  
 Don't you think they're the likeliest to know,  
     [my rage,  
 They with their Latin? So, I swallow

Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight,  
 and paint  
 To please them—sometimes do and some-  
 times don't;  
 For, doing most, there's pretty sure to  
 come  
 A turn, some warm eve finds me at my  
 saints—  
 A laugh, a cry, the business of the  
 world—  
*(Flower o' the Peach,*  
*Death for us all, and his own life for*  
*each!)*  
 And my whole soul revolves, the cup  
 runs over,  
 The world and life's too big to pass for  
 a dream,  
 And I do these wild things in sheer  
 despite,  
 And play the fooleries you catch me at,  
 In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out  
 at grass  
 After hard years, throws up his stiff  
 heels so,  
 Although the miller does not preach to  
 him  
 The only good of grass is to make chaff.  
 What would men have? Do they like  
 grass or no—  
 May they or may n't they? all I want's  
 the thing  
 Settled forever one way. As it is,  
 You tell too many lies and hurt your-  
 self:  
 You don't like what you only like too  
 much,  
 You do like what, if given you at your  
 word,  
 You find abundantly detestable.  
 For me, I think I speak as I was taught;  
 I always see the garden and God there  
 A-making man's wife: and, my lesson  
 learned,  
 The value and significance of flesh,  
 I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I  
 know.  
 But see, now—why, I see as certainly  
 As that the morning-star's about to  
 shine,  
 What will hap some day. We've a  
 youngster here  
 Comes to our convent, studies what I do,  
 Slouches and stares and lets no atom  
 drop:  
 His name is Guidi—he'll not mind the  
 monks— [talk—  
 They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them

He picks my practice up—he'll paint  
 apace.  
 I hope so—though I never live so long,  
 I know what's sure to follow. You be  
 judge!  
 You speak no Latin more than I, belike;  
 However, you're my man, you've seen  
 the world  
 —The beauty and the wonder and the  
 power,  
 The shapes of things, their colors, lights  
 and shades,  
 Changes, surprises,—and God made it  
 all!  
 —For what? Do you feel thankful, ay  
 or no,  
 For this fair town's face, yonder river's  
 line,  
 The mountain round it and the sky above,  
 Much more the figures of man, woman,  
 child,  
 These are the frame to? What's it all  
 about?  
 To be passed over, despised? or dwelt  
 upon,  
 Wondered at? oh, this last of course!—  
 you say.  
 But why not do as well as say,—paint  
 these  
 Just as they are, careless what comes of  
 it?  
 God's works—paint any one, and count  
 it crime  
 To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His  
 works  
 Are here already; nature is complete:  
 Suppose you reproduce her—(which you  
 can't)  
 There's no advantage! you must beat  
 her, then."  
 For, don't you mark? we're made so  
 that we love  
 First when we see them painted, things  
 we have passed  
 Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to  
 see;  
 And so they are better, painted—better  
 to us,  
 Which is the same thing. Art was  
 given for that;  
 God uses us to help each other so,  
 Lending our minds out. Have you no-  
 ticed, now,  
 Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of  
 chalk,  
 And trust me but you should, though!  
 How much more,  
 If I drew higher things with the same  
 truth!

That were to take the Prior's pulpit-  
place,  
Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,  
It makes me mad to see what men shall  
do  
And we in our graves! This world's  
no blot for us,  
Nor blank; it means intensely, and  
means good:  
To find its meaning is my meat and  
drink.  
"Ay, but you don't so instigate to  
prayer!"  
Strikes in the Prior: "when your mean-  
ing's plain  
It does not say to folk—remember  
matins,  
Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why,  
for this  
What need of art at all? A skull and  
bones,  
Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or,  
what's best,  
A bell to chime the hour with, does as  
well.  
I painted a Saint Laurence six months  
since  
At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine  
style:  
"How looks my painting, now the scaf-  
fold's down?"  
I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns—  
"Already not one phiz of your three  
slaves  
Who turn the Deacon off his toasted  
side,  
But 's scratched and prodded to our  
heart's content.  
The pious people have so eased their own  
With coming to say prayers there in a  
rage:  
We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.  
Expect another job this time next year,  
For pity and religion grow i' the  
crowd—  
Your painting serves its purpose!"  
Hang the fools!

—That is—you 'll not mistake an idle  
word  
Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God  
wot,  
Tasting the air this spicy night which  
turns  
The unaccustomed head like Chianti  
wine!  
Oh, the church knows! don't misreport  
me, now!  
It's natural a poor monk out of bounds

Should have his apt word to excuse  
himself:  
And harken how I plot to make  
amends.  
I have bethought me: I shall paint a  
piece  
... There's for you! Give me six  
months, then go, see  
Something in Sant' Ambrogio's! Bless  
the nuns!  
They want a cast o' my office. I shall  
paint  
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,  
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-  
brood,  
Lilies and vestments and white faces,  
sweet  
As puff on puff of grated orris-root  
When ladies crowd to Church at mid-  
summer.  
And then i' the front, of course a saint  
or two—  
Saint John, because he saves the Flo-  
rentines,  
Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black  
and white  
The convent's friends and gives them a  
long day,  
And Job, I must have him there past  
mistake.  
The man of Uz (and Us without the z,  
Painters who need his patience). Well,  
all these  
Secured at their devotion, up shall come  
Out of a corner when you least expect,  
As one by a dark stair into a great light,  
Music and talking, who but Lippo!  
I!—  
Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck—  
I 'm the man!  
Back I shrink—what is this I see and  
hear?  
I, caught up with my monk's-things by  
mistake,  
My old serge gown and rope that goes  
all-round,  
I, in this presence, this pure company!  
Where's a hole, where's a corner for  
escape?  
Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing  
Forward, puts out a soft palm—"Not so  
fast!"  
—Addresses the celestial presence,  
"nay—  
He made you and devised you, after all,  
Though he's none of you! Could Saint  
John there draw--  
His camel-hair make up a painting-  
brush?

We come to brother Lippo for all that,  
*Iste perfect opus!*" So, all smile—  
 I shuffle sideways with my blushing face  
 Under the cover of a hundred wings  
 Thrown like a spread of kirtles when  
     you're gay  
 And play hot cockles, all the doors being  
     shut,  
 Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops  
 The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle  
     off  
 To some safe bench behind, not letting  
     go  
 The palm of her, the little lily thing  
 That spoke the good word for me in the  
     nick,  
 Like the Prior's niece . . . Saint Lucy,  
     I would say,  
 And so all's saved for me, and for the  
     church  
 A pretty picture gained. Go, six months  
     hence!  
 Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights,  
     no lights!  
 The street's hushed, and I know my  
     own way back,  
 Don't fear me! There's the gray be-  
     ginning. Zooks! 1855.

## ANDREA DEL SARTO

## CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,  
 No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for  
     once:  
 Sit down and all shall happen as you  
     wish.  
 You turn your face, but does it bring  
     your heart?  
 I'll work then for your friend's friend,  
     never fear,  
 Treat his own subject after his own way,  
 Fix his own time, accept too his own  
     price,  
 And shut the money into this small hand  
 When next it takes mine. Will it?  
     tenderly?  
 Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow,  
     Love!  
 I often am much wearier than you think,  
 This evening more than usual, and it  
     seems  
 As if—forgive now—should you let me  
     sit  
 Here by the window with your hand in  
     mine  
 And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,  
 Both of one mind, as married people use,

Quietly, quietly the evening through,  
 I might get up to-morrow to my work  
 Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try,  
 To-morrow, how you shall be glad for  
     this!

Your soft hand is a woman of itself,  
 And mine the man's bared breast she  
     curls inside.

Don't count the time lost, neither; you  
     must serve

For each of the five pictures we require:  
 It saves a model. So! keep looking so—  
 My serpentine beauty, rounds on  
     rounds!

—How could you ever prick those per-  
     fect ears,

Even to put the pearl there! oh, so  
     sweet—

My face, my moon, my everybody's  
     moon,

Which everybody looks on and calls his,  
 And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,  
 While she looks—no one's: very dear,  
     no less.

You smile? why, there's my picture  
     ready made,

There's what we painters call our har-  
     mony!

A common grayness silvers everything,—  
 All in a twilight, you and I alike

—You, at the point of your first pride in  
     me

(That's gone you know),—but I, at  
     every point;

My youth, my hope, my art, being all  
     toned down

To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.

There's the bell clinking from the chapel-  
     top;

That length of convent-wall across the  
     way

Holds the trees safer, huddled more in-  
     side;

The last monk leaves the garden; days  
     decrease,

And autumn grows, autumn in every-  
     thing.

Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape  
 As if I saw alike my work and self

And all that I was born to be and do,

A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's  
     hand.

How strange now looks the life he makes  
     us lead;

So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!  
 I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!

This chamber for example—turn your  
     head—

All that's behind us! You don't under-  
     stand

Nor care to understand about my art,  
 But you can hear at least when people  
     speak :  
 And that cartoon, the second from the  
     door  
 —It is the thing, Love! so such things  
     should be—  
 Behold Madonna! —I am bold to say.  
 I can do with my pencil what I know,  
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart  
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—  
 Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,  
 I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are  
     judge,  
 Who listened to the Legate's talk last  
     week,  
 And just as much they used to say in  
     France.  
 At any rate 't is easy, all of it!  
 No sketches first, no studies, that 's long  
     past :  
 I do what many dream of all their lives,  
 —Dream? strive to do, and agonize to  
     do,  
 And fail in doing. I could count twenty  
     such  
 On twice your fingers, and not leave this  
     town,  
 Who strive—you don't know how the  
     others strive  
 To paint a little thing like that you  
     smeared  
 Carelessly passing with your robes  
     afloat,—  
 Yet do much less, so much less, Some-  
     one says,  
 (I know his name, no matter)—so much  
     less!  
 Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am  
     judged.  
 There burns a truer light of God in them.  
 In their vexed beating stuffed and  
     stopped-up brain.  
 Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to  
     prompt  
 This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's  
     hand of mine.  
 Their works drop groundward, but them-  
     selves, I know.  
 Reach many a time a heaven that 's shut  
     to me,  
 Enter and take their place there sure  
     enough,  
 Though they come back and cannot tell  
     the world.  
 My works are nearer heaven, but I sit  
     here.  
 The sudden blood of these men! at a  
     word—

Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it  
     boils too.  
 I, painting from myself and to myself,  
 Know what I do, am unmoved by men's  
     blame  
 Or their praise either. Somebody re-  
     marks  
 Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,  
 His hue mistaken; what of that? or  
     else,  
 Rightly traced and well ordered; what  
     of that?  
 Speak as they please, what does the  
     mountain care?  
 Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his  
     grasp,  
 Or what 's a heaven for? All is silver-  
     gray  
 Placid and perfect with my art: the  
     worse!  
 I know both what I want and what might  
     gain.  
 And yet how profitless to know, to sigh  
 "Had I been two, another and myself,  
 Our head would have o'erlooked the  
     world!" No doubt.  
 Yonder 's a work now, of that famous  
     youth  
 The Urbinate who died five years ago.  
 (T is copied, George Vasari sent it me.)  
 Well, I can fancy how he did it all,  
 Pouring his soul, with kings and popes  
     to see,  
 Reaching, that heaven might so replenish  
     him,  
 Above and through his art—for it gives  
     way :  
 That arm is wrongly put—and there  
     again—  
 A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,  
 Its body, so to speak: its soul is right.  
 He means right—that, a child may un-  
     derstand.  
 Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:  
 But all the play, the insight and the  
     stretch—  
 Out of me, out of me! And wherefore  
     out?  
 Had you enjoined them on me, given  
     me soul,  
 We might have risen to Rafael, I and  
     you!  
 Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I  
     think—  
 More than I merit, yes, by many times.  
 But had you—oh, with the same perfect  
     brow.  
 And perfect eyes, and more than perfect  
     mouth,



And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird  
 The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare—  
 Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!  
 Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged  
 "God and the glory! never care for gain,  
 The present by the future, what is that?  
 Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!  
 Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"  
 I might have done it for you. So it seems:  
 Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.  
 Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;  
 The rest avail not. Why do I need you?  
 What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?  
 In this world, who can do a thing, will not;  
 And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:  
 Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the power—  
 And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,  
 God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.  
 'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,  
 That I am something underrated here,  
 Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.  
 I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,  
 For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.  
 The best is when they pass and look aside;  
 But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.  
 Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,  
 And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!  
 I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,  
 Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,  
 In that humane great monarch's golden look,—  
 One finger in his beard or twisted curl  
 Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,  
 One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,  
 The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,  
 I painting proudly with his breath on me,  
 All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,  
 Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls

Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts,—  
 And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,  
 This in the background, waiting on my work,  
 To crown the issue with a last reward!  
 A good time, was it not, my kingly days?  
 And had you not grown restless . . . but I know—  
 'T is done and past; 't was right, my instinct said;  
 Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,  
 And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt  
 Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.  
 How could it end in any other way?  
 You called me, and I came home to your heart.  
 The triumph was—to reach and stay there; since  
 I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?  
 Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,  
 You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!  
 "Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;  
 The Roman's is the better when you pray,  
 But still the other's Virgin was his wife"—  
 Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge  
 Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows  
 My better fortune, I resolve to think.  
 For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,  
 Said one day Agnolo, his very self,  
 To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .  
 (When the young man was flaming out his thoughts  
 Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,  
 Too lifted up in heart because of it)  
 "Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub  
 Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,  
 Who, were he set to plan and execute  
 As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,  
 Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!"  
 To Rafael's!—And indeed the arm is wrong.  
 I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,  
 Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line should go!  
 Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!

Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,  
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?  
Do you forget already words like those?)  
If really there was such a chance, so  
lost,—

Is, whether you 're—not grateful—but  
more pleased.

Well, let me think so. And you smile  
indeed!

This hour has been an hour! Another  
smile?

If you would sit thus by me every night  
I should work better, do you compre-  
hend?

I mean that I should earn more, give  
you more.

See, it is settled dusk now; there's a  
star;

Morello's gone, the watch-lights show  
the wall,

The cue-owls speak the name we call  
them by.

Come from the window, love,—come in,  
at last,

Inside the melancholy little house  
We built to be so gay with. God is just.

King Francis may forgive me: oft at  
nights

When I look up from painting, eyes tired  
out,

The walls become illumined, brick from  
brick

Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright  
gold,

That gold of his I did cement them with!  
Let us but love each other. Must you go?

That Cousin here again? he waits out-  
side?

Must see you—you, and not with me?  
Those loans?

More gaming debts to pay? you smiled  
for that?

Well, let smiles buy me! have you more  
to spend?

While hand and eye and something of a  
heart

Are left me, work's my ware, and  
what's it worth?

I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit  
The gray remainder of the evening out,

Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly  
How I could paint, were I but back in

France,  
One picture, just one more—the Virgin's

face.  
Not yours this time! I want you at my

side  
To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—  
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.

Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your  
friend.

I take the subjects for his corridor,  
Finish the portrait out of hand—there,  
there,

And throw him in another thing or two  
If he demurs; the whole should prove  
enough

To pay for this same Cousin's freak.  
Beside,

What's better and what's all I care  
about,

Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!  
Love, does that please you? Ah, but  
what does he,

The Cousin! what does he to please you  
more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-  
night.

I regret little, I would change still less.  
Since there my past life lies, why alter  
it?

The very wrong to Francis!—it is true  
I took his coin, was tempted and com-  
plied,

And built this house and sinned, and all  
is said.

My father and my mother died of want.  
Well, had I riches of my own? you see

How one gets rich! Let each one bear  
his lot.

They were born poor, lived poor, and  
poor they died;

And I have labored somewhat in my  
time

And not been paid profusely. Some  
good son

Paint my two hundred pictures—let him  
try!

No doubt, there's something strikes a  
balance. Yes.

You loved me quite enough, it seems  
to-night.

This must suffice me here. What would  
one have?

In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one  
more chance—

Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,  
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,

For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me  
To cover—the three first without a wife,

While I have mine! So—still they  
overcome

Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I  
choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my  
Love.

1855.

ONE WORD MORE.<sup>1</sup>

TO E. B. B.

*London, September, 1855.*

## I

THERE they are, my fifty men and  
women  
Naming me the fifty poems finished!  
Take them, Love, the book and me  
together:  
Where the heart lies, let the brain lie  
also.

## II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,  
Made and wrote them in a certain  
volume  
Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil  
Else he only used to draw Madonnas:  
These, the world might view—but one,  
the volume.  
Who that one, you ask? Your heart  
instructs you.  
Did she live and love it all her lifetime?  
Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,  
Die, and let it drop beside her pillow  
Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,  
Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving,  
Cheek, the world was wont to hail a  
painter's,  
Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a  
poet's?

## III

You and I would rather read that  
volume,  
(Taken to his beating bosom by it)  
Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,  
Would we not? than wonder at Madon-  
nas—  
Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,  
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,  
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre—  
Seen by us and all the world in circle.

## IV

You and I will never read that volume.  
Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple  
Guarded long the treasure-book and  
loved it.  
Guido Reni dying, all Bologna  
Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours,  
the treasure!"  
Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

<sup>1</sup> The last poem of the Collection *Men and Women*, two volumes, published in 1855, and containing a large part of Browning's greatest work. Here, for once, Browning speaks in his own person.

## V

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:  
Whom to please? You whisper "Bea-  
trice."  
While he mused and traced it and re-  
traced it,  
(Peradventure with a pen corroded  
Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped  
for,  
When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the  
wicked,  
Back he held the brow and pricked its  
stigma,  
Bit into the live man's flesh for parch-  
ment,  
Loosed him, laughed to see the writing  
rankle,  
Let the wretch go festering through  
Florence)—  
Dante, who loved well because he hated,  
Hated wickedness that hinders loving,  
Dante standing, studying his angel,—  
In there broke the folk of his *Inferno*.  
Says he—"Certain people of import-  
ance"  
(Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)  
"Entered and would seize, forsooth, the  
poet."  
Says the poet—"Then I stopped my  
painting."

## VI

You and I would rather see that angel,  
Painted by the tenderness of Dante,  
Would we not?—than read a fresh  
*Inferno*.

## VII

You and I will never see that picture.  
While he mused on love and Beatrice.  
While he softened o'er his outlined angel.  
In they broke, those "people of import-  
ance":  
We and Bice bear the loss forever.

## VIII

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's pic-  
ture?  
This: no artist lives and loves, that long  
not  
Once, and only once, and for one only.  
(Ah, the prize!) to find his love a lan-  
guage  
Fit and fair and simple and sufficient—  
Using nature that's an art to others,  
Not, this one time, art that's turned his  
nature,  
Ay, of all the artists living, loving.

None but would forego his proper  
dowry,—  
Does he paint? he fain would write a  
poem,—  
Does he write? he fain would paint a  
picture,  
Put to proof art alien to the artist's,  
Once, and only once, and for one only,  
So to be the man and leave the artist,  
Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's  
sorrow.

## IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's  
abatement!  
He who smites the rock and spreads the  
water,  
Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath  
him,  
Even he, the minute makes immortal,  
Proves, perchance, but mortal in the  
minute.  
Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.  
While he smites, how can he but re-  
member,  
So he smote before, in such a peril,  
When they stood and mocked—" Shall  
smiting help us?"  
When they drank and sneered — " A  
stroke is easy!"  
When they wiped their mouths and went  
their journey,  
Throwing him for thanks—" But drought  
was pleasant."  
Thus old memories mar the actual  
triumph;  
Thus the doing savors of disrelish;  
Thus achievement lacks a gracious some-  
what;  
O'er-importuned brows becloud the  
mandate,  
Carelessness or consciousness—the ges-  
ture.  
For he bears an ancient wrong about him,  
Sees and knows again those phalanxed  
faces,  
Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed  
prelude—  
" How shouldst thou, of all men, smite,  
and save us?"  
Guesses what is like to prove the sequel—  
" Egypt's flesh-pots—nay, the drought  
was better."

## X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic  
warrant!  
Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven bril-  
liance,

Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial  
flat.  
Never dares the man put off the prophet.

## XI

Did he love one face from out the  
thousands,  
(Were she Jethro's daughter, white and  
wifely,  
Were she but the Æthiopian bondslave,)  
He would envy yon dumb patient camel,  
Keeping a reserve of scanty water  
Meant to save his own life in the desert;  
Ready in the desert to deliver  
(Kneeling down to let his breast be  
opened)  
Hoard and life together for his mistress.

## XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,  
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you  
statues,  
Make you music that should all-express  
me;  
So it seems: I stand on my attainment.  
This of verse alone, one life allows me;  
Verse and nothing else have I to give you.  
Other heights in other lives, God willing:  
All the gifts from all the heights, your  
own, Love!

## XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us—  
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must  
seize it.  
Take these lines, look lovingly and  
nearly,  
Lines I write the first time and the last  
time.  
He who works in fresco, steals a hair-  
brush,  
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient  
proudly,  
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,  
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,  
Fills his lady's missal-marge with  
flowerets.  
He who blows through bronze, may  
breathe through silver,  
Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.  
He who writes, may write for once as I  
do.

## XIV

Love, you saw me gather men and  
women,  
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,  
Enter each and all, and use their service,

Speak from every mouth,—the speech, a poem.

Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,  
Hope and fears, belief and disbelieving :  
I am mine and yours—the rest be all men's.

Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.  
Let me speak this once in my true person,

Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,  
Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence :

Pray you, look on these my men and women,

Take and keep my fifty poems finished ;  
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also !

Poor the speech ; be how I speak, for all things.

## XV

Not but that you know me ! Lo, the moon's self !

Here in London, yonder late in Florence,  
Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured,

Curving on a sky imbrued with color,  
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,  
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.

Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,  
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,

Perfect till the nightingales applauded.  
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,  
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,

Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,  
Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

## XVI

What, there's nothing in the moon noteworthy ?

Nay : for if that moon could love a mortal,  
Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),  
All her magic ('t is the old sweet mythos),  
She would turn a new side to her mortal,  
Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman—

Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,  
Blind to Galileo on his turret,  
Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats—him, even !

Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal—

When she turns round, comes again in heaven,

Opens out anew for worse or better !

Proves she like some portent of an iceberg

Swimming full upon the ship it founders,  
Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals ?

Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire

Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain ?

Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu  
Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,

Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.  
Like the bodied heaven in his clearness  
Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,

When they ate and drank and saw God also !

## XVII

What were seen ? None knows, none ever shall know.

Only this is sure—the sight were other,  
Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,

Dying now impoverished here in London.  
God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures

Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,

One to show a woman when he loves her !

## XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love !  
This to you—yourself my moon of poets !

Ah, but that 's the world's side, there 's the wonder,

Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you !

There, in turn I stand with them and praise you—

Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.  
But the best is when I glide from out them,

Cross a step or two of dubious twilight.  
Come out on the other side, the novel  
Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,

Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

## XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas.  
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno.

Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it.

Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom !

R. B. 1855.

## BEN KARSHOOK'S WISDOM

## I

"WOULD a man 'escape the rod?"  
 Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,  
 "See that he turn to God  
 The day before his death."  
 "Ay, could a man inquire  
 When it shall come!" I say.  
 The Rabbi's eye shoots fire—  
 "Then let him turn to-day!"

## II

Quoth a young Sadducee:  
 "Reader of many rolls,  
 Is it so certain we  
 Have, as they tell us, souls?"  
 "Son, there is no reply!"  
 The Rabbi bit his beard:  
 "Certain, a soul have I—  
 We may have none," he sneered.

Thus Karshook, the Hiram's-Hammer,  
 The Right-hand Temple-column,  
 Taught babes in grace their grammar,  
 And struck the simple, solemn.  
 1956.

## AMONG THE ROCKS

Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old  
 earth,  
 This autumn morning! How he sets  
 his bones  
 To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees  
 and feet  
 For the ripple to run over in its  
 mirth;  
 Listening the while, where on the heap  
 of stones  
 The white breast of the sea-lark twitters  
 sweet.  
 That is the doctrine, simple, ancient,  
 true;  
 Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles  
 and knows.  
 If you loved only what were worth your  
 love,  
 Love were clear gain, and wholly well  
 for you:  
 Make the low nature better by your  
 throes!  
 Give earth yourself, go up for gain  
 above!  
 1864.

## ABT VOGLER

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPOREIZING  
 UPON THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OF HIS  
 INVENTION)

WOULD that the structure brave, the  
 manifold music I build,  
 Bidding my organ obey, calling its  
 keys to their work,  
 Claiming each slave of the sound, at a  
 touch, as when Solomon willed  
 Armies of angels that soar, legions of  
 demons that lurk,  
 Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end  
 and of aim,  
 Adverse, each from the other heaven-  
 high, hell-deep removed,—  
 Should rush into sight at once as he  
 named the ineffable Name,  
 And pile him a palace straight, to pleas-  
 ure the princess he loved!

Would it might tarry like his, the beau-  
 tiful building of mine,  
 This which my keys in a crowd  
 pressed and importuned to raise!  
 Ah, one and all, how they helped, would  
 dispart now and now combine,  
 Zealous to hasten the work, heighten  
 their master his praise!  
 And one would bury his brow with a  
 blind plunge down to hell,  
 Burrow awhile and build, broad on  
 the roots of things,  
 Then up again swim into sight, having  
 based me my palace well,  
 Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on  
 the nether springs.

And another would mount and march,  
 like the excellent minion he was,  
 Ay, another and yet another, one  
 crowd but with many a crest,  
 Raising my rampired walls of gold as  
 transparent as glass,  
 Eager to do and die, yield each his  
 place to the rest:  
 For higher still and higher (as a runner  
 tips with fire,  
 When a great illumination surprises a  
 festal night—  
 Outlined round and round Rome's dome  
 from space to spire)  
 Up, the pinnaced glory reached, and  
 the pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it  
 was certain, to match man's birth,

Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I ;  
 And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach the earth,  
 As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the sky :  
 Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt with mine,  
 Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wandering star ;  
 Meteor-moons, balls of blaze : and they did not pale nor pine,  
 For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near nor far.

Nay more ; for there wanted not who walked in the glare and glow,  
 Presences plain in the place ; or, fresh from the Protoplast,  
 Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier wind should blow,  
 Lured now to begin and live, in a house to their liking at last ;  
 Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed through the body and gone,  
 But were back once more to breathe in an old world worth their new :  
 What never had been, was now ; what was, as it shall be anon ;  
 And what is,—shall I say, matched both ? for I was made perfect too.

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a wish of my soul,  
 All through my soul that praised as its wish flowed visibly forth,  
 All through music and me ! For think, had I painted the whole,  
 Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process so wonder-worth :  
 Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect proceeds from cause,  
 Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is told ;  
 It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,  
 Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list enrolled :—

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,  
 Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are !  
 And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,  
 That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.  
 Consider it well : each tone of our scale in itself is naught :

It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said :  
 Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought :  
 And there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and bow the head !

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared ;  
 Gone ! and the good tears start, the praises that come too slow ;  
 For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he feared,  
 That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was to go.  
 Never to be again ! But many more of the kind  
 As good, nay, better, perchance : is this your comfort to me ?  
 To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind  
 To the same, same self, same love, same God : ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name ?  
 Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands !  
 What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same ?  
 Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands ?  
 There shall never be one lost good ! What was, shall live as before ;  
 The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound ;  
 What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more ;  
 On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist ;  
 Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good, nor power  
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist  
 When eternity affirms the conception of an hour,  
 The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
 The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky.  
 Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard ;  
 Enough that he heard it once : we shall hear it by and by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence

For the fulness of the days? Have  
we withered or agonized?  
Why else was the pause prolonged but  
that singing might issue thence?  
Why rushed the discords in, but that  
harmony should be prized?  
Morrow is hard to bear, and doubt is  
slow to clear,  
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme  
of the weal and woe:  
But God has a few of us whom he whis-  
pers in the ear;  
The rest may reason and welcome; 't is  
we musicians know.

Tell, it is earth with me; silence re-  
sumes her reign:  
I will be patient and proud, and soberly  
acquiesce.  
Give me the keys. I feel for the com-  
mon chord again,  
Sliding by semitones till I sink to the  
minor,—yes,  
And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand  
on alien ground,  
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled  
from into the deep;  
Which, hark, I have dared and done,  
for my resting-place is found,  
The C Major of this life: so, now I will  
try to sleep. 1864.

## RABBI BEN EZRA

How old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was  
made:  
Our times are in his hand  
Who saith, "A whole I planned,  
Forth shows but half; trust God: see  
all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,  
Forth sighed, "Which rose make ours,  
Which lily leave and then as best re-  
call?"  
Not that, admiring stars,  
Yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars:  
Fine be some figured flame which  
blends, transcends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears  
Nulling youth's brief years,  
O I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!  
Rather I prize the doubt  
Of kinds exist without,  
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by  
a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,  
Were man but formed to feed  
On joy, to solely seek and find a feast:  
Such feasting ended, then  
As sure an end to men:  
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets  
doubt the maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied  
To that which doth provide  
And not partake, effect and not receive!  
A spark disturbs our clod;  
Nearer we hold of God  
Who gives, than of his tribes that take,  
I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand  
but go!  
Be our joys three-parts pain!  
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;  
Learn, nor account the pang; dare,  
never grudge the throe!

For thence,—a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks,—  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:  
What I aspired to be,  
And was not, comforts me:  
A brute I might have been, but would  
not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute  
Whose flesh has soul to suit,  
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs  
want play?  
To man, propose this test—  
Thy body at its best,  
How far can that project thy soul on its  
lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:  
I own the Past profuse  
Of power each side, perfection every  
turn:  
Eyes, ears took in their dole,  
Brain treasured up the whole;  
Should not the heart beat once "How  
good to live and learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine!  
I see the whole design,  
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect  
too:  
Perfect I call thy plan:  
Thanks that I was a man!  
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what  
thou shalt do!"



For pleasant is this flesh ;  
Our soul, in its rose-mesh  
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for  
rest :

Would we some prize might hold  
To match those manifold  
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as  
we did best !

Let us not always say,  
"Spite of this flesh to-day  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon  
the whole !"

As the bird wings and sings,  
Let us cry, "All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now,  
than flesh helps soul !"

Therefore I summon age  
To grant youth's heritage,  
Life's struggle having so far reached its  
term :

Thence shall I pass, approved  
A man, for aye removed  
From the developed brute ; a God though  
in the germ.

And I shall thereupon  
Take rest, ere I be gone  
Once more on my adventure brave and  
new :

Fearless and unperplexed,  
When I wage battle next,  
What weapons to select, what armor to  
indue.

Youth ended, I shall try  
My gain or loss thereby ;  
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is  
gold :

And I shall weigh the same,  
Give life its praise or blame :  
Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know,  
being old.

For note, when evening shuts,  
A certain moment cuts  
The deed off, calls the glory from the  
gray :

A whisper from the west  
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,  
Take it and try its worth : here dies an-  
other day."

So, still within this life,  
Though lifted o'er its strife,  
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at  
last,  
"This rage was right i' the main,

That acquiescence vain :  
The Future I may face now I have proved  
the Past."

For more is not reserved  
To man, with soul just nerved  
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day :  
Here, work enough to watch  
The Master work, and catch  
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the  
tool's true play.

As it was better, youth  
Should strive, through acts uncouth,  
Toward making, than repose on aught  
found made :

So, better, age, exempt  
From strife, should know, than tempt  
Further. Thou waitedst age : wait death  
nor be afraid !

Enough now, if the Right  
And Good and Infinite  
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand  
thine own,

With knowledge absolute,  
Subject to no dispute  
From fools that crowded youth, nor let  
thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,  
Severed great minds from small.  
Announced to each his station in the  
Past !

Was I, the world arraigned,  
Were they, my soul disdained,  
Right? Let age speak the truth and  
give us peace at last !

Now, who shall arbitrate ?  
Ten men love what I hate,  
Shun what I follow, slight what I re-  
ceive ;

Ten, who in ears and eyes  
Match me : we all surmise.  
They this thing, and I that : whom shall  
my soul believe ?

Not on the vulgar mass  
Called "work," must sentence pass.  
Things done, that took the eye and had  
the price ;  
O'er which, from level stand,  
The low world laid its hand,  
Found straightway to its mind, could  
value in a trice :

But all, the world's coarse thumb  
And finger failed to plumb,

So passed in making up the main account :  
 All instincts immature,  
 All purposes unsure,  
 That weighed not as his work, yet  
 swelled the man's amount :

Thoughts hardly to be packed  
 Into a narrow act,  
 Fancies that broke through language  
 and escaped ;  
 All I could never be,  
 All, men ignored in me,  
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel  
 the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,  
 That metaphor ! and feel  
 Why time spins fast, why passive lies  
 our clay,—

Thou, to whom fools propound,  
 When the wine makes its round,  
 " Since life fleets, all is change ; the  
 Past gone, seize to-day ! "

Fool ! All that is, at all,  
 Lasts ever, past recall ;  
 Earth changes, but thy soul and God  
 stand sure :  
 What entered into thee,  
 That was, is, and shall be :  
 Time's wheel runs back or stops : Potter  
 and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
 Of plastic circumstance,  
 This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain  
 arrest :  
 Machinery just meant  
 To give thy soul its bent,  
 Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently  
 impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,  
 Which ran the laughing loves  
 Around thy base, no longer pause and  
 press ?  
 What though, about thy rim,  
 Skull-things in order grim  
 Grow out, in graver mood, obey the  
 sterner stress ?

Look not thou down but up !  
 To uses of a cup,  
 The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's  
 peal.  
 The new wine's foaming flow,  
 The master's lips aglow !  
 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what  
 needst thou with earth's wheel ?

But I need, now as then,  
 Thee, God, who moulded men ;  
 And since, not even while the whirl was  
 worst,  
 Did I—to the wheel of life  
 With shapes and colors rife,  
 Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to  
 slake thy thirst :

So, take and use thy work :  
 Amend what flaws may lurk,  
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings  
 past the aim !  
 My times be in thy hand !  
 Perfect the cup as planned !  
 Let age approve of youth, and death  
 complete the same ! 1864.

### CALIBAN UPON SETEBOS ;

#### OR, NATURAL THEOLOGY IN THE ISLAND

" Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such  
 an one as thyself. "

[ WILL sprawl, now that the heat of day  
 is best,  
 Flat on his belly in the pit's much mire,  
 With elbows wide, fists clenched to prop  
 his chin.  
 And, while he kicks both feet in the cool  
 slush,  
 And feels about his spine small eft-things  
 course,  
 Run in and out each arm, and make  
 him laugh : [plant,  
 And while above his head a pompion-  
 Coating the cave-top as a brow its eye,  
 Creeps down to touch and tickle hair and  
 beard.  
 And now a flower drops with a bee inside.  
 And now a fruit to snap at, catch and  
 crunch,—  
 He looks out o'er yon sea which sun-  
 beams cross  
 And recross till they weave a spider-web,  
 (Meshes of fire, some great fish breaks  
 at times,) [please,  
 And talks to his own self, howe'er he  
 Touching that other, whom his dam  
 called God.  
 Because to talk about Him, vexes—ha,  
 Could He but know ! and time to vex is  
 now,  
 When talk is safer than in winter-time.  
 Moreover Prosper and Miranda sleep  
 In confidence he drudges at their task.  
 And it is good to cheat the pair, and gibe,  
 Letting the rank tongue blossom into  
 speech.]

Setebos, Setebos, and Setebos !

'Thinketh, He dwalleth i' the cold o' the moon.

'Thinketh He made it, with the sun to match,

But not the stars ; the stars came other-wise ;

Only made clouds, winds, meteors, such as that :

Also this isle, what lives and grows thereon,

And snaky sea which rounds and ends the same.

'Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease :  
He hated that He cannot change His cold,

Nor cure its ache. 'Hath spied an icy fish

That longed to 'scape the rock-stream where she lived,

And thaw herself within the lukewarm brine

O' the lazy sea her stream thrusts far amid,

A crystal spike 'twixt two warm walls of wave ;

Only, she ever sickened, found repulse At the other kind of water, not her life,

(Green-dense and dim-delicious, bred o' the sun,)

Flounced back from bliss she was not born to breathe.

And in her old bounds buried her despair,  
Hating and loving warmth alike : so He.

'Thinketh, He made thereat the sun, this isle,

Trees and the fowls here, beast and creeping thing.

Yon otter, sleek-wet, black, lithe as a leech ;

Yon auk, one fire-eye in a ball of foam,  
That floats and feeds ; a certain badger brown

He hath watched hunt with that slant whitewedge eye

By moonlight ; and the pie with the long tongue

That pricks deep into oakwarts for a worm,

And says a plain word when she finds her prize,

But will not eat the ants ; the ants them-  
That build a wall of seeds and settled stalks

About their hole—He made all these and more,

Made all we see, and us, in spite : how else ?

He could not, Himself, make a second self

To be His mate ; as well have made Himself :

He would not make what He mislikes or slights,

An eyesore to Him, or not worth His pains :

But did, in envy, listlessness or sport,  
Make what Himself would fain, in a manner, be—

Weaker in most points, stronger in a few,  
Worthy, and yet mere playthings all the while,

Things He admires and mocks too,—that is it.

Because, so brave, so better though they be,

It nothing skills if He begin to plague.  
Look now, I melt a gourd-fruit into mash,

Add honeycomb and pods, I have perceived,

Which bite like finches when they bill and kiss,—

Then, when froth rises bladdery, drink up all,

Quick, quick, till maggots scamper through my brain ;

Last, throw me on my back i' the seeded thyme,

And wanton, wishing I were born a bird.  
Put case, unable to be what I wish,

I yet could make a live bird out of clay :  
Would not I take clay, pinch my Caliban

Able to fly?—for, there, see, he hath wings,

And great comb like the hoopoe's to admire,

And there, a sting to do his foes offence,  
There, and I will that he begin to live.

Fly to yon rock-top, nip me off the horns  
Of grigs high up that make the merry din

Saucy through their veined wings, and mind me not.

In which feat, if his leg snapped, brittle clay,

And he lay stupid-like,—why I should laugh ;

And if he, spying me should fall to weep  
Beseech me to be good, repair his wrong.

Bid his poor leg smart less or grow again,—

Well, as the chance were this night take or else

Not take my fancy : I might hear his cry  
And give the manikin three sound legs

for one,

Or pluck the other off, leave him like an  
egg,  
And lessoned he was mine and merely  
clay.  
Were this no pleasure lying in the  
thyme,  
Drinking the mash, with brain become  
alive  
Making and marring clay at will? So  
He.

'Thinketh such shows nor right nor  
wrong in Him,  
Nor kind nor cruel: He is strong and  
Lord.  
'Am strong myself compared to yonder  
crabs  
That march now from the mountain to  
the sea;  
'Let twenty pass and stone the twenty-  
first,  
Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.  
'Say, the first straggler that boasts purple  
spots  
Shall join the file, one pincer twisted off;  
'Say this bruised fellow shall receive a  
worm,  
And two worms he whose nippers end  
in red;  
As it likes me each time I do: so He.

Well then, 'supposeth He is good i' the  
main,  
Placable if His mind and ways were  
guessed,  
But rougher than His handiwork, be  
sure!  
Oh, He hath made things worthier than  
Himself,  
And envieth that, so helped, such things  
do more  
Than He who made them! What con-  
soles but this?  
That they, unless through Him, do  
naught at all,  
And must submit: what other use in  
things?  
'Hath cut a pipe of pithless elder-joint  
That, blown through, gives exact the  
scream o' the jay  
When from her wing you twitch the  
feathers blue:  
Sound this, and little birds that hate the  
jay  
Flock within stone's throw, glad their  
foe is hurt:  
Put case such pipe could prattle and  
boast forsooth, [thing,  
"I catch the birds, I am the crafty

I make the cry my maker cannot make  
With his great round mouth; he must  
blow through mine!"  
Would not I smash it with my foot? So  
He.

But wherefore rough, why cold and ill  
at ease?

Aha, that is a question! Ask, for that,  
What knows,—the something over Sete-  
bos

That made Him, or He, may be, found  
and fought,

Worsted, drove off and did to nothing,  
perchance.

There may be something quiet o'er His  
head,

Out of His reach, that feels nor joy nor  
grief,

Since both derive from weakness in  
some way.

I joy because the quails come; would  
not joy

Could I bring quails here when I have a  
mind:

This Quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth.

'Esteemeth stars the outposts of its  
couch,

But never spends much thought nor care  
that way.

It may look up, work up, the worse for  
those

It works on! 'Careth but for Setebos

The many-handed as a cuttle-fish,

Who, making Himself feared through  
what He does,

Looks up, first, and perceives he cannot  
soar

To what is quiet and hath happy life;

Next looks down here, and out of very  
spite

Makes this a bauble-world to ape yon  
real,

These good things to match those as hips  
do grapes.

'Tis solace making baubles, ay, and  
sport.

Himself peeped late, eyed Prosper at his  
books

Careless and lofty, lord now of the isle:

Vexed, 'stitched a book of broad leaves,  
arrow-shaped,

Wrote thereon, he knows what, prodigi-  
ous words:

Has peeled a wand and called it by a  
name:

Weareth at whiles for an enchanter's  
robe

The eyed skin of a supple oncelot;

And hath an ounce sleeker than young-  
ling mole,  
A four-legged serpent he makes cower  
and couch,  
Now snarl, now hold its breath and  
mind his eye,  
And saith she is Miranda and my wife :  
'Keeps for his Ariel a tall pouch-bill  
crane  
He bids go wade for fish and straight  
disgorge ;  
Also a sea-beast, lumpish, which he  
snared,  
Blinded the eyes of and brought some-  
what tame,  
And split its toe-webs, and now pens the  
drudge  
In a hole o' the rock, and calls him Cali-  
ban ;  
A bitter heart that bides its time and  
bites.  
'Plays thus at being Prosper in a way.  
Taketh his mirth with make-believes: so  
He.

His dam held that the Quiet made all  
things  
Which Setebos vexed only : 'holds not  
so.  
Who made them weak, meant weakness  
He might vex.  
Had He meant other, while His hand  
was in,  
Why not make horny eyes no thorn  
could prick.  
Or plate my scalp with bone against  
the snow,  
Or overscale my flesh 'neath joint and  
joint  
Like an orc's armor? Ay,—so spoil His  
sport !  
He is the One now : only He doth all.

'Saith, He may like, perchance, what  
profits him.  
Ay, himself loves what does him good ;  
but why ?  
'Gets good no otherwise. This blinded  
beast  
Loves whoso places flesh-meat on his  
nose.  
But, had he eyes, would want no help,  
but hate  
Or love, just as it liked him : he hath  
eyes.  
Also it pleases Setebos to work.  
Use all His hands, and exercise much  
craft, [worked.  
By no means for the love of what is

'Tasteth himself, no finer good i' the  
world  
When all goes right, in this safe summer-  
time,  
And he wants little, hungers, aches not  
much,  
Than trying what to do with wit and  
strength.  
'Falls to make something : 'piled yon  
pile of turfs,  
And squared and stuck there squares of  
soft white chalk,  
And, with a fish-tooth, scratched a moon  
on each,  
And set up endwise certain spikes of  
tree,  
And crowned the whole with a sloth's  
skull a-top.  
Found dead i' the woods, too hard for  
one to kill.  
No use at all i' the work, for work's sole  
sake ;  
'Shall some day knock it down again: so  
He.

'Saith He is terrible : watch His feats in  
proof !  
One hurricane will spoil six good  
months' hope.  
He hath a spite against me, that I know,  
Just as He favors Prosper, who knows  
why ?  
So it is, all the same, as well I find.  
'Wove wattles half the winter, fenced  
them firm  
With stone and stake to stop she-  
tortoises  
Crawling to lay their eggs here: well,  
one wave,  
Feeling the foot of Him upon its neck,  
Gaped as a snake does, lolled out its  
large tongue,  
And licked the whole labor flat : so  
much for spite.

'Saw a ball flame down late (yonder it  
lies)  
Where half an hour before, I slept i' the  
shade :  
Often they scatter sparkles : there is  
force !  
'Dug up a newt He may have envied  
once  
And turned to stone, shut up inside a  
stone.  
Please Him and hinder this?—What  
Prosper does ?  
Aha, if He would tell me how ! Not He !  
There is the sport : discover how or die !

All need not die, for of the things o' the  
isle  
Some flee afar, some dive, some run up  
trees;  
Those at His mercy,—why they please  
Him most  
When . . . when . . . well, never try  
the same way twice!  
Repeat what act has pleased, He may  
grow wroth.  
You must not know His ways, and play  
Him off,  
Sure of the issue. Doth the like him-  
self:  
'Spareth a squirrel that it nothing fears  
But steals the nut from underneath my  
thumb,  
And when I threaten, bites stoutly in de-  
fence:  
'Spareth an urchin that contrariwise,  
Curls up into a ball, pretending death  
For fright at my approach: the two ways  
please.  
But what would move my choler more  
than this,  
That either creature counted on its life  
To-morrow and next day and all days to  
come,  
Saying, forsooth, in the inmost of its  
heart,  
"Because he did so yesterday with me,  
And otherwise with such another brute,  
So must he do henceforth and always."—  
Ay?  
Would teach the reasoning couple what  
"must" means!  
'Doth as he likes, or wherefore Lord?  
So He.

'Conceiveth all things will continue thus,  
And we shall have to live in fear of Him  
So long as He lives, keeps his strength:  
no change,  
If He have done His best, make no new  
world  
To please Him more, so leave off watch-  
ing this,—  
If He surprise not even the Quiet's self  
Some strange day,—or, suppose, grow  
into it  
As grubs grow butterflies: else, here we  
are, [all.  
And there is He, and nowhere help at  
all.

'Believeth with the life, the pain shall  
stop.  
His dam held different, that after death  
He both plagued enemies and feasted  
friends:

Idly! He doth His worst in this our  
life.  
Giving just respite lest we die through  
pain,  
Saving last pain for worst,—with which,  
an end.  
Meanwhile, the best way to escape His  
ire  
Is, not to seem too happy. 'Sees, him-  
self,  
Yonder two flies, with purple films and  
pink,  
Bask on the pompion-bell above: kills  
both.  
'Sees two black painful beetles roll their  
ball  
On head and tail as if to save their lives:  
Moves them the stick away they strive  
to clear.

Even so,' would have him misconceive,  
suppose  
This Caliban strives hard and ails no less,  
And always, above all else, envies Him;  
Wherefore he mainly dances on dark  
nights,  
Moans in the sun, gets under holes to  
laugh,  
And never speaks his mind save housed  
as now:  
Outside, 'groans, curses. If He caught  
me here,  
O'erheard this speech, and asked "What  
chucklest at?"  
'Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off,  
Or of my three kid yearlings burn the  
best,  
Or let the toothsome apples rot on tree,  
Or push my tame beast for the orc to  
taste:  
While myself lit a fire, and made a song  
And sung it, "What I hate, be consecrate,  
To celebrate Thee and Thy state, no mate  
For Thee; what see for envy in poor  
me?"

Hoping the while, since evils sometimes  
mend,  
Warts rub away and sores are cured with  
slime,  
That some strange day, will either the  
Quiet catch  
And conquer Setebos, or likelier He  
Decrepit may doze, as good as die.

[What, what? A curtain o'er the world  
at once!  
Crickets stop hissing; not a bird—or,  
ves.

There scuds His raven that has told Him  
all!  
It was fool's play, this prattling! Ha!  
The wind  
Shoulders the pillared dust, death's house  
o' the move,  
And fast invading fires begin! White  
blaze—  
A tree's head snaps—and there, there,  
there, there, there,  
His thunder follows! Fool to gibe at  
Him!  
Lo! Lieth flat and loveth Setebos!  
'Maketh his teeth meet through his upper  
lip, [month  
Will let those quails fly, will not eat this  
One little mess of wheelks, so he may  
'scape!]

1864.

## CONFESSIONS

WHAT is he buzzing in my ears?  
"Now that I come to die,  
Do I view the world as a vale of tears?"  
Ah, reverend sir, not I!

What I viewed there once, what I view  
again

Where the physic bottles stand  
On the table's edge,—is a suburb lane,  
With a wall to my bedside hand.

That lane sloped, much as the bottles do,  
From a house you could descry  
O'er the garden-wall; is the curtain blue  
Or green to a healthy eye?

To mine, it serves for the old June  
weather  
Blue above lane and wall;  
And that farthest bottle labelled  
"Ether"

Is the house o'ertopping all.

At a terrace, somewhere near the  
stopper,

There watched for me, one June,  
A girl: I know, sir, it's improper,  
My poor mind's out of tune.

Only, there was a way . . . you crept  
Close by the side, to dodge  
Eyes in the house, two eyes except:  
They styled their house "The Lodge."

What right had a lounge up their lane?  
But, by creeping very close,  
With the good wall's help,—their eyes  
might strain  
And stretch themselves to Oes,

Yet never catch her and me together,  
As she left the attic, there,  
By the rim of the bottle labelled  
"Ether,"  
And stole from stair to stair,

And stood by the rose-wreathed gate.  
Alas,  
We loved, sir—used to meet:  
How sad and bad and mad it was—  
But, then, how it was sweet! 1864.

## YOUTH AND ART

It once might have been, once only:  
We lodged in a street together,  
You, a sparrow on the house top lonely.  
I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,  
You thumb'd, thrust, patted and  
polished,  
Then laughed "They will see some day  
Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;  
I chirped, cheep'd, trilled and twi-  
tered,  
"Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,  
And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble  
Than you by a sketch in plaster:  
You wanted a piece of marble,  
I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,  
Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos.  
For air, looked out on the tiles,  
For fun, watched each other's win-  
dows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South.  
Cap and blouse—nay, a bit of beard  
too:

Or you got it, rubbing your mouth  
With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I—soon managed to find  
Weak points in the flower-fence facing.  
Was forced to put up a blind  
And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault  
If you never turned your eye's tail up  
As I shook upon *E in alt.*,  
Or ran the chromatic scale up:

For spring bade the sparrows pair,  
And the boys and girls gave guesses.

lls in our street looked rare  
bulrush and watercresses.

I not you pinch a flower  
ellet of clay and fling it?  
I not I put a power  
inks in a look, or sing it?

lk, sharp as a lynx,  
yet the memory rankles.)  
odels arrived, some minx  
d up-stairs, she and her ankles.

ink I gave you as good!  
t foreign fellow,—who can know  
pays, in a playful mood,  
s tuning her that piano?"

ou say so, and never say,  
ose we join hands and fortunes,  
tch her from over the way,  
iano, and long tunes and short  
nes?"

you would not be rash,  
rasher and something over:  
to settle yet (Gibson's hash,  
risi yet lives in clover.

meet the Prince at the Board,  
een myself at *bals-paré*,  
ried a rich old lord,  
ou 're dubbed knight and an  
A.

unfulfilled, you see;  
gs still, patchy and scrappy:  
not sighed deep, laughed free,  
d, feasted, despaired,—been  
ppy.

ody calls you a dunce,  
eople suppose me clever:  
ld but have happened once,  
e missed it, lost it forever.

1864.

#### A FACE

ould have that little head of hers  
upon a background of pale gold,  
the Tuscan's early art prefers!  
e encroaching on the matchless  
ould  
two lips, which should be open-  
g soft  
pure profile: not as when she  
ighs,  
spoils all: but rather as if aloft  
cinth, she loves so, leaned its  
uff's

Burden of honey-colored buds to kiss  
And capture 'twixt the lips apart for  
this.

Then her lithe neck, three fingers might  
surround,

How it should waver on the pale gold  
ground

Up to the fruit-shaped, perfect chin it  
lifts!

I know, Correggio loves to mass, in rifts  
Of heaven, his angel faces, orb on orb  
Breaking its outline, burning shades  
absorb:

But these are only massed there, I should  
think,

Waiting to see some wonder momentarily  
Grow out, stand full, fade slow against  
the sky

(That 's the pale ground you 'd see this  
sweet face by).

All heaven, meanwhile, condensed into  
one eye

Which fears to lose the wonder, should  
it wink. 1864.

#### PROSPICE

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my  
throat,

The mist in my face,  
When the snows begin, and the blasts  
denote

I am nearing the place,  
The power of the night, the press of the  
storm,

The post of the foe;  
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a  
visible form,

Yet the strong man must go:  
For the journey is done and the summit  
attained,

And the barriers fall.  
Though a battle's to fight ere the guer-  
don be gained,

The reward of it all.  
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,  
The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my  
eyes, and forbore,

And bade me creep past.  
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare  
like my peers

The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad  
life's arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold.  
For sudden the worst turns the best to  
the brave,

The black minute's at end,



And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices  
 that rave,  
 Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
 Shall change, shall become first a peace  
 out of pain,  
 Then a light, then thy breast,  
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp  
 thee again,  
 And with God be the rest! 1861. 1864.

## EPILOGUE

## TO DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WITLESS alike of will and way divine,  
 How heaven's high with earth's low  
 should intertwine!  
 Friends, I have seen through your eyes:  
 now use mine!

Take the least man of all mankind, as I;  
 Look at his head and heart, find how  
 and why  
 He differs from his fellows utterly:

Then, like me, watch when nature by  
 degrees  
 Grows alive round him, as in Arctic seas  
 (They said of old) the instinctive water  
 flees

Toward some elected point of central  
 rock,  
 As though, for its sake only, roamed the  
 flock  
 Of waves about the waste: awhile they  
 mock

With radiance caught for the occasion,  
 —hues  
 Of blackest hell now, now such reds and  
 blues  
 As only heaven could fitly interfuse,—

The mimic monarch of the whirlpool,  
 king  
 O' the current for a minute: then they  
 wring  
 Up by the roots and oversweep the thing,

And hasten off, to play again elsewhere  
 The same part, choose another peak as  
 bare,  
 They find and flatter, feast and finish  
 there.

When you see what I tell you,—nature  
 dance  
 About each man of us, retire, advance.  
 As though the pageant's end were to  
 enhance

His worth, and—once the life, his pro-  
 duct, gained—  
 Roll away elsewhere, keep the strife  
 sustained,  
 And show thus real, a thing the North  
 but feigned—

When you acknowledge that one world  
 could do  
 All the diverse work, old yet ever new,  
 Divide us, each from other, me from  
 you,—

Why, where's the need of Temple, when  
 the walls  
 O' the world are that? What use of  
 swells and falls  
 From Levites' choir, Priests' cries, and  
 trumpet-calls?

That one Face, far from vanish, rather  
 grows,  
 Or decomposes but to recompose,  
 Become my universe that feels and  
 knows! 1864.

DEDICATION OF THE RING AND  
THE BOOK

## (END OF BOOK I)

SUCH, British Public, ye who like me not  
 (God love you!)—whom I yet have  
 labored for,  
 Perchance more careful whoso runs may  
 read  
 Than erst when all, it seemed, could  
 read who ran.—  
 Perchance more careless whoso reads  
 may praise  
 Than late when he who praised and read  
 and wrote  
 Was apt to find himself the selfsame  
 me,—  
 Such labor had such issue, so I wrought  
 This arc, by furtherance of such alloy.  
 And so, by one spirt, take away its trace  
 Till, justifiably golden, rounds my ring.

A ring without a posy, and that ring  
 mine?

O lyric Love, half angel and half bird.  
 And all a wonder and a wild desire.—  
 Boldest of hearts that ever braved the  
 sun,  
 Took sanctuary within the holier blue.  
 And sang a kindred soul out to his face.—  
 Yet human at the red-ripe of the heart—

When the first summons from the dark-  
ling earth  
Reached thee amid thy chambers,  
blanched their blue,  
And bared them of the glory—to drop  
down,  
To toil for man, to suffer or to die,—  
This is the same voice : can thy soul  
know change?  
Hail then, and harken from the realms  
of help !  
Never may I commence my song, my due  
To God who best taught song by gift of  
thee,  
Except with bent head and beseeching  
hand—  
That still, despite the distance and the  
dark, [change  
What was, again may be ; some inter-  
Of grace, some splendor once thy very  
thought,  
Some benediction anciently thy smile :  
—Never conclude, but raising hand and  
head  
Thither where eyes, that cannot reach,  
yet yearn  
For all hope, all sustainment, all reward.  
Their utmost up and on,—so blessing  
back  
In those thy realms of help, that heaven  
thy home,  
Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face  
makes proud,  
Some wanness where, I think, thy foot  
may fall ! 1868.

## HERVÉ RIEL

## I

ON the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen  
hundred ninety-two,  
Did the English fight the French,—woe  
to France !  
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-  
skelter through the blue,  
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a  
shoal of sharks pursue,  
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint  
Malo on the Rance,  
With the English fleet in view.

## II

'T was the squadron that escaped, with  
the victor in full chase ;  
First and foremost of the drove, in his  
great ship, Damfreville ;  
Close on him fled, great and small,  
Twenty-two good ships in all ;

And they signalled to the place  
“ Help the winners of a race !  
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take  
us quick—or, quicker still,  
Here 's the English can and will ! ”

## III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk  
and leaped on board ;  
“ Why what hope or chance have ships  
like these to pass ? ” laughed they :  
“ Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all  
the passage scarred and scored,  
Shall the ‘ Formidable ’ here with her  
twelve and eighty guns  
Think to make the river-mouth by the  
single narrow way,  
Trust to enter where 't is ticklish for a  
craft of twenty tons,  
And with flow at full beside ?  
Now, 't is slackest ebb of tide.  
Reach the mooring ? Rather say,  
While rock stands or water runs,  
Not a ship will leave the bay ! ”

## IV

Then was called a council straight.  
Brief and bitter the debate :  
“ Here's the English at our heels ; would  
you have them take in tow  
All that's left us of the fleet, linked to-  
gether stern and bow,  
For a prize to Plymouth Sound ?  
Better run the ships aground ! ”  
(Ended Damfreville his speech).  
“ Not a minute more to wait !  
Let the Captains all and each  
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the  
vessels on the beach !  
France must undergo her fate.

## V

“ Give the word ! ” But no such word  
Was ever spoke or heard :  
For up stood, for out stepped, for in  
struck amid all these  
—A Captain ? A Lieutenant ? A Mate—  
first, second, third ?  
No such man of mark, and meet  
With his betters to compete !  
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by  
Tourville for the fleet,  
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the  
Croisickese.

## VI

And “ What mockery or malice have we  
here ? ” cries Hervé Riel :

"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools, or rogues?  
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell  
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell,

'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river disembogues?  
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?  
Morn and eve, night and day,  
Have I piloted your bay,  
Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.

Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hagues!  
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!

Only let me lead the line,  
Have the biggest ship to steer,  
Get this 'Formidable' clear,  
Make the others follow mine,  
And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,  
Right to Solidor past Grève,  
And there lay them safe and sound:  
And if one ship misbehave,  
—Keel so much as grate the ground,  
Why I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

## VII

Not a minute more to wait,  
"Steer us in, then, small and great!  
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!" cried its chief.  
Captains, give the sailor place!  
He is Admiral, in brief.  
Still the north-wind, by God's grace!  
See the noble fellow's face  
As the big ship, with a bound,  
Clears the entry like a hound,  
Keeps the passage as its inch of way were the wide sea's profound!  
See, safe through shoal and rock,  
How they follow in a flock,  
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground,  
Not a spar that comes to grief!  
The peril, see, is past,  
All are harbored to the last,  
And just as Hervé Riel hollas  
"Anchor!"—sure as fate,  
Up the English come—too late!

## VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm:  
They see the green trees wave

On the heights o'erlooking Grève.  
Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.  
"Just our rapture to enhance,  
Let the English rake the bay,  
Gnash their teeth and glare askance  
As they cannonade away!  
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance!"  
How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!  
Out burst all with one accord,  
"This is Paradise for Hell!  
Let France, let France's King  
Thank the man that did the thing!"  
What a shout, and all one word,  
"Hervé Riel!"  
As he stepped in front once more,  
Not a symptom of surprise  
In the frank blue Breton eyes,  
Just the same man as before.

## IX

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,  
I must speak out at the end,  
Though I find the speaking hard.  
Praise is deeper than the lips:  
You have saved the King his ships.  
You must name your own reward.  
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!  
Demand whate'er you will,  
France remains your debtor still.  
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not Damfreville."

## X

Then a beam of fun outbroke  
On the bearded mouth that spoke,  
As the honest heart laughed through  
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:  
"Since I needs must say my say,  
Since on board the duty 's done,  
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point,  
what is it but a run?—  
Since 't is ask and have, I may—  
Since the others go ashore—  
Come! A good whole holiday!  
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle Aurore!"  
That he asked and that he got,—nothing more.

## XI

Name and deed alike are lost:  
Not a pillar nor a post  
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;  
Not a head in white and black  
On a single fishing-smack,

istory of the man but for whom  
 l gone to wrack  
 at France saved from the fight  
 ence England bore the bell.  
 'aris: rank on rank  
 h the heroes flung pell-mell  
 Louvre, face and flank!  
 shall look long enough ere you  
 ne to Hervé Riel.  
 better and for worse,  
 Riel, accept my verse,  
 verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once  
 re  
 e squadron, honor France, love  
 wife, the Belle Aurore! 1871.

## FINE AT THE FAIR

## PROLOGUE

## AMPHIBIAN

ncy I had to-day,  
 y which turned a fear!  
 far out in the bay,  
 waves laughed warm and clear.

nd looked at the sun,  
 noon-sun looked at me:  
 n us two, no one  
 creature, that I could see.

There came floating by  
 who lay floating too,  
 strange butterfly!  
 ure as dear as new:

n the membraned wings  
 nderful, so wide,  
 suffused, were things  
 soul and naught beside.

breadth overhead!  
 f the sea my own,  
 ed the sky instead;  
 of us were alone.

shall join its flight,  
 naught buoys flesh in air.  
 ich the sea—good night!  
 sure and swift waits there.

insect feel the better  
 ratching the uncouth play  
 s that slip the fetter,  
 nd as they were not clay?

tedly I rejoice  
 the air comports so well  
 creature which had the choice  
 e land once. Who can tell?

What if a certain soul  
 Which early slipped its sheath,  
 And has for its home the whole  
 Of heaven, thus look beneath,

Thus watch one who, in the world,  
 Both lives and likes life's way,  
 Nor wishes the wings unfurled  
 That sleep in the worm, they say?

But sometimes when the weather  
 Is blue, and warm waves tempt  
 To free one's self of tether,  
 And try a life exempt

From worldly noise and dust,  
 In the sphere which overbrims  
 With passion and thought,—why, just  
 Unable to fly, one swims!

By passion and thought upborne.  
 One smiles to one's self—"They fare  
 Scarce better, they need not scorn  
 Our sea, who live in the air!"

Emancipate through passion  
 And thought, with sea for sky,  
 We substitute, in a fashion,  
 For heaven—poetry:

Which sea, to all intent,  
 Gives flesh such noon-disport  
 As a finer element  
 Affords the spirit-sort.

Whatever they are, we seem:  
 Imagine the thing they know;  
 All deeds they do, we dream;  
 Can heaven be else but so?

And meantime, yonder streak  
 Meets the horizon's verge;  
 That is the land, to seek  
 If we tire or dread the surge:

Land the solid and safe—  
 To welcome again (confess!)  
 When, high and dry, we chafe  
 The body, and don the dress.

Does she look, pity, wonder  
 At one who mimics flight,  
 Swims—heaven above, sea under,  
 Yet always earth in sight? 1872.

## EPILOGUE

## THE HOUSEHOLDER

SAVAGE I was sitting in my house, late,  
 lone:

Dreary, weary with the long day's  
work:  
Head of me, heart of me, stupid as a  
stone:

Tongue-tied now, now blaspheming  
like a Turk;

When, in a moment, just a knock, call,  
cry,

Half a pang and all a rapture, there  
again were we!—

"What, and is it really you again?"  
quoth I:

"I again, what else did you expect?"  
quoth She.

"Never mind, hie away from this old  
house—

Every crumbling brick embrowned  
with sin and shame!

Quick, in its corners ere certain shapes  
arouse!

Let them—every devil of the night—  
lay claim,

Make and mend, or rap and rend, for  
me! Good-by!

God be their guard from disturbance  
at their glee,

Till, *crash*, comes down the carcass in a  
heap!" quoth I:

"Nay, but there's a decency re-  
quired!" quoth She.

"Ah, but if you knew how time has  
dragged, days, nights!

All the neighbor-talk with man and  
maid—such men!

All the fuss and trouble of street-sounds,  
window-sights:

All the worry of flapping door and  
echoing roof; and then,

All the fancies . . . Who were they had  
leave, dared try

Darker arts that almost struck despair  
in me?

If you knew but how I dwelt down  
here!" quoth I:

"And was I so better off up there?"  
quoth She.

"Help and get it over! *Reunited to  
his wife*

(How draw up the paper lets the par-  
ish people know?)

*Lies M. or N., departed from this life.*  
*Day the this or that, month and year*

*the so and so.*  
What i' the way of final flourish? Prose,  
verse? Try!

*Affliction sore long time he bore, or,*  
*what is it to be?*

*Till God did please to grant him ease.*  
Do end!" quoth I:

"I end with—Love is all, and Death  
is nought!" quoth She. 1872.

## HOUSE

SHALL I sonnet-sing you about myself?

Do I live in a house you would like to  
see?

Is it scant of gear, has it store of pelf?

"Unlock my heart with a sonnet-  
key?"

Invite the world, as my betters have  
done?

"Take notice: this building remains  
on view,

Its suites of reception every one,  
Its private apartment and bedroom  
too;

"For a ticket, apply to the Publisher."  
No: thanking the public, I must de-  
cline.

A peep through my window, if folk pre-  
fer;

But, please you, no foot over threshold  
of mine!

I have mixed with a crowd and heard  
free talk

In a foreign land where an earthquake  
chanced

And a house stood gaping, naught to  
balk

Man's eye wherever he gazed or  
glanced.

The whole of the frontage shaven sheer,  
The inside gaped: exposed to day,

Right and wrong and common and  
queer,

Bare, as the palm of your hand, it lay.

The owner? Oh, he had been crushed,  
no doubt!

"Odd tables and chairs for a man of  
wealth!

What a parcel of musty old books about!  
He smoked,—no wonder he lost his  
health!

"I doubt if he bathed before he dressed.  
A brasier?—the pagan, he burned  
perfumes!

You see it is proved, what the neighbors  
guessed:

His wife and himself had separate  
rooms."

Friends, the good man of the house at  
least  
Kept house to himself till an earth-  
quake came :  
T is the fall of its frontage permits you  
feast  
On the inside arrangement you praise  
or blame.

Outside should suffice for evidence :  
And whoso desires to penetrate  
Deeper, must dive by the spirit-sense—  
No optics like yours, at any rate !

“Hoity-toity ! A street to explore,  
Your house the exception ! ‘*With this  
same key*  
*Shakespeare unlocked his heart !*’”—  
Once more,  
Did Shakespeare ? If so, the less  
Shakespeare he ! 1876.

## FEARS AND SCRUPLES

HERE 's my case. Of old I used to love  
him,  
This same unseen friend, before I  
knew :  
Dream there was none like him, none  
above him.—  
Wake to hope and trust my dream was  
true.

Loved I not his letters full of beauty ?  
Not his actions famous far and wide ?  
Absent, he would know I vowed him  
duty ;  
Present, he would find me at his side.

Pleasant fancy ! for I had but letters,  
Only knew of actions by hearsay :  
He himself was busied with my betters ;  
What of that ? My turn must come  
some day.

“Some day ” proving—no day ! Here's  
the puzzle.  
Passed and passed my turn is. Why  
complain ?  
He 's so busied ! If I could but muzzle  
People's foolish mouths that give me  
pain !

“Letters ? ” (hear them ! ) “You a  
judge of writing ?  
Ask the experts ! How they shake the  
head  
O'er these characters, your friend's in-  
diting—  
Call them forgery from A to Z !

“Actions ? Where's your certain proof ”  
(they bother)

“He, of all you find so great and  
good,  
He, he only, claims this, that, the other  
Action—claimed by men, a multi-  
tude ? ”

I can simply wish I might refute you,  
Wish my friend would,—by a word, a  
wink,—  
Bid me stop that foolish mouth,—you  
brute you !  
He keeps absent,—why, I cannot  
think.

Never mind ! Though foolishness may  
flout me,  
One thing 's sure enough : 't is neither  
frost,  
No, nor fire, shall freeze or burn from  
out me  
Thanks for truth—though falsehood,  
gained—though lost.

All my days, I'll go the softlier, sadlier,  
For that dream's sake ! How forget  
the thrill  
Through and through me as I thought  
“The gladlier  
Lives my friend because I love him  
still ! ”

Ah, but there 's a menace some one  
utters !  
“What and if your friend at home  
play tricks ?  
Peep at hide-and-seek behind the shut-  
ters ?  
Mean your eyes should pierce through  
solid bricks ?

“What and if he, frowning, wake you,  
dreamy ?  
Lay on you the blame that bricks—  
conceal ?  
Say, ‘*At least I saw who did not see me.*  
*Does see now, and presently shall*  
*feel* ’ ?

“Why, that makes your friend a mon-  
ster ! ” say you :  
“Had his house no window ? At first  
nod,  
Would you not have hailed him ? ”  
Hush, I pray you !  
What if this friend happened to be—  
God ? 1876.

## NATURAL MAGIC

ALL I can say is—I saw it !  
 The room was as bare as your hand.  
 I locked in the swarth little lady,—I  
     swear,  
 From the head to the foot of her—well,  
     quite as bare !  
 “ No Nautch shall cheat me,” said I,  
     “ taking my stand  
 At this bolt which I draw ! ” And this  
     bolt—I withdraw it,  
 And there laughs the lady, not bare, but  
     embowered  
 With—who knows what verdure, o'er-  
     fruited, o'erflowered ?  
 Impossible ! Only—I saw it !

All I can sing is—I feel it !  
 This life was as blank as that room ;  
 I let you pass in here. Precaution, in-  
     deed ?  
 Walls, ceiling and floor,—not a chance  
     for a weed !  
 Wide opens the entrance : where 's cold  
     now, where 's gloom ?  
 No May to sow seed here, no June to  
     reveal it,  
 Behold you enshrined in these blooms  
     of your bringing,  
 These fruits of your bearing—nay, birds  
     of your winging !  
 A fairy-tale ! Only—I feel it ! 1876.

## MAGICAL NATURE

FLOWER—I never fancied, jewel—I pro-  
     fess you !  
     Bright I see and soft I feel the outside  
     of a flower.  
 Save but glow inside and—jewel, I  
     should guess you.  
     Dim to sight and rough to touch : the  
     glory is the dower.  
 You, forsooth, a flower ? Nay, my love,  
     a jewel—  
     Jewel at no mercy of a moment in  
     your prime !  
 Time may fray the flower-face : kind be  
     time or cruel.  
     Jewel, from each facet, flash your  
     laugh at time ! 1876.

## APPEARANCES

AND so you found that poor room dull.  
 Dark, hardly to your taste, my dear ?  
 Its features seemed unbeautiful :

But this I know—'t was there, not here,  
 You plighted troth to me, the word  
 Which—ask that poor room how it heard.

And this rich room obtains your praise  
 Unqualified,—so bright, so fair,  
 So all whereat perfection stays ?  
 Ay, but remember—here, not there,  
 The other word was spoken !—Ask  
 This rich room how you dropped the  
     mask ! 1876.

## EPILOGUE

## TO THE PACCHIAROTTO VOLUME

μεστοί . . .  
 οἱ δ' ἀμφοτέρους οἶνον μέλανος ἀνθοσπίου.

“ THE poets pour us wine—”  
 Said the dearest poet I ever knew,  
 Dearest and greatest and best to me.  
 You clamor athirst for poetry—  
 We pour. “ But when shall a vintage  
     be ”—  
 You cry—“ strong grape, squeezed  
     gold from screw,  
 Yet sweet juice, flavored flowery-fine ?  
 That were indeed the wine ! ”

One pours your cup—stark strength,  
 Meat for a man ; and you eye the pulp  
 Strained, turbid still, from the viscous  
     blood  
 Of the snaky bough : and you grumble  
     “ Good !  
 For it swells resolve, breeds hardihood :  
 Dispatch it, then, in a single gulp ! ”  
 So, down, with a wry face, goes at  
     length  
 The liquor : stuff for strength.

One pours your cup—sheer sweet,  
 The fragrant fumes of a year con-  
     densed :  
 Suspicion of all that 's ripe or rathe.  
 From the bud on branch to the grass in  
     swathe,  
 “ We suck mere milk of the seasons,”  
     saith  
 A curl of each nostril—“ dew, dis-  
     pensed  
 Nowise for nerving man to feat :  
 Boys sip such honeyed sweet ! ”

And thus who wants wine strong,  
 Waves each sweet smell of the year  
     away ;  
 Who likes to swoon as the sweets suffuse

His brain with a mixture of beams and  
dews  
Turned syrupy drink—rough strength  
eschews;  
“What though in our veins your wine-  
stock stay?  
The lack of the bloom does our palate  
wrong.  
Give us wine sweet, not strong!”

Yet wine is—some affirm—  
Prime wine is found in the world  
somewhere,  
Of portable strength with sweet to  
match.  
You double your heart its dose, yet  
catch—  
As the draught descends—a violet-  
smatch,  
Softness—however it came there,  
Through drops expressed by the fire and  
worm:  
Strong sweet wine—some affirm.

Body and bouquet both?  
Tis easy to ticket a bottle so;  
But what was the case in the cask, my  
friends?  
Cask? Nay, the vat—where the maker  
mends  
His strong with his sweet (you suppose)  
and blends  
His rough with his smooth, till none  
can know  
How it comes you may tipple, nothing  
loth,  
Body and bouquet both.

“You” being just—the world.  
No poets—who turn, themselves, the  
winch  
Of the press; no critics—I’ll even say.  
(Being flustered and easy of faith to-  
day.)  
Who for love of the work have learned  
the way  
Till themselves produce home-made,  
at a pinch:  
No! You are the world, and wine ne’er  
purred  
Except to please the world!

“For, oh the common heart!  
And, ah the irremissible sin  
Of poets who please themselves, not us!  
Strong wine yet sweet wine pouring  
thus!  
How please still—Pindar and Æschy-  
lus!

Drink—dipped into by the bearded  
chin  
Alike and the bloomy lip—no part  
Denied the common heart!

“And might we get such grace,  
And did you moderns but stock our  
vault  
With the true half-brandly half-attar-gul,  
How would seniors indulge at a hearty  
pull  
While juniors tossed off their thimble-  
ful!  
Our Shakespeare and Milton escaped  
your fault,  
So, they reign supreme o’er the weaker  
race  
That wants the ancient grace!”

If I paid myself with words  
(As the French say well) I were dupe  
indeed!  
I were found in belief that you quaffed  
and bowed  
At your Shakespeare the whole day  
long, caroused  
In your Milton pottle-deep nor drowsed  
A moment of night—toped on, took  
heed  
Of nothing like modern cream-and-  
curds.  
Pay me with deeds, not words!

For—see your cellarage!  
There are forty barrels with Shakes-  
peare’s brand.  
Some five or six are abroach: the rest  
Stand spigoted, fauceted. Try and test  
What yourselves call best of the very  
best!  
How comes it that still untouched they  
stand?  
Why don’t you try tap, advance a stage  
With the rest in the cellarage?

For—see your cellarage!  
There are four big butts of Milton’s  
brew.  
How comes it you make old drips and  
drops  
Do duty, and there devotion stops?  
Leave such an abyss of malt and hops  
Embellish in butts which bungs still  
glue? [rage!  
You hate your bard! A fig for your  
Free him from cellarage!

’Tis said I brew stiff drink,  
But the deuce a flavor of grape is  
there.



Hardly a May-go-down, 't is just  
 A sort of a gruff Go-down-it-must—  
 No Merry-go-down, no gracious gust  
 Commingles the racy with Spring-  
 tide's rare!  
 "What wonder," say you, "that we  
 cough, and blunk  
 At Autumn's heady drink?"

Is it a fancy, friends?  
 Mighty and mellow are never mixed,  
 Though mighty and mellow be born at  
 once.  
 Sweet for the future,—strong for the  
 nonce!  
 Stuff you should stow away, ensconce  
 In the deep and dark, to be found fast-  
 fixed  
 At the century's close: such time  
 strength spends  
 A-sweetening for my friends!

And then—why, what you quaff  
 With a smack of lip and a cluck of  
 tongue,

Is leakage and leavings—just what haps  
 From the tun some learned taster taps  
 With a promise "Prepare your watery  
 chaps!

Here 's properest wine for old and  
 young!  
 Dispute its perfection? You make us  
 laugh!

Have faith, give thanks, but—  
 quaff!"

Leakage, I say, or—worse—  
 Leavings suffice, pot-valiant souls.  
 Somebody, brimful, long ago,  
 Frothed flagon he drained to the dregs;  
 and, lo,  
 Down whisker and beard what an over-  
 flow!

Lick spilth that has trickled from  
 classic jowls,  
 Sup the single scene, sip the only verse—  
 Old wine, not new and worse!

I grant you: worse by much!  
 Renounce that new where you never  
 gained

One glow at heart, one gleam at head,  
 And stick to the warrant of age in-  
 stead!

No dwarf's-lap! Fatten, by giants fed!  
 You fatten, with oceans of drink un-  
 drained?

You feed—who would choke did a cob-  
 web smutch  
 The Age you love so much?

A mine 's beneath a moor:  
 Acres of moor roof fathoms of mine  
 Which diamonds dot where you please  
 to dig;  
 Yet who plies spade for the bright and  
 big?  
 Your product is—truffles, you hunt with  
 a pig!  
 Since bright-and-big, when a man  
 would dine,  
 Suits badly: and therefore the Koh-  
 i-noor  
 May sleep in mine 'neath moor!

Wine, pulse in might from me!  
 It may never emerge in must from  
 vat,  
 Never fill cask nor furnish can,  
 Never end sweet, which strong began—  
 God's gift to gladden the heart of man;  
 But spirit 's at proof, I promise that!  
 No sparing of juice spoils what should  
 be  
 Fit brewage—mine for me.

Man's thoughts and loves and hates!  
 Earth is my vineyard, these grow  
 there:  
 From grape of the ground, I made or  
 marred  
 My vintage; easy the task or hard,  
 Who set it—his praise be my reward!  
 Earth's yield! Who yearn for the  
 Dark Blue Sea's,  
 Let them "lay, pray, bray"—the addle-  
 pates!  
 Mine be Man's thoughts, loves,  
 hates!

But some one says, "Good Sir!"  
 ("T is a worthy versed in what concerns  
 The making such labor turn out well.)  
 "You don't suppose that the nosegay-  
 smell

Needs always come from the grape?  
 Each bell

At your foot, each bud that your cul-  
 ture spurns

The very cowslip would act like myrrh  
 On the stiffest brew—good Sir!

"Cowslips, abundant birth  
 O'er meadow and hillside, vineyard  
 too,

—Like a schoolboy's scrawlings in and  
 out

Distasteful lesson-book—all about  
 Greece and Rome, victory and rout—  
 Love-verses instead of such vain ado!

as frolic it o'er the earth  
re thoughts have rightlier birth.

oughtlings they themselves ;  
hates—in little and less and  
st !

! ? ' *What is a man beside a  
unt !* ' ' *Absent—poor lovers the min-  
s count !* ' ' *Fie—Pope's letters to Martha  
unt !* ' ' *Furnish a wine for a children's  
st :*

o man, they suit the elves  
thoughts, loves, hates, them-  
ves. "

nds, beyond dispute  
ave the cowslips dewy and dear.  
as Springtide forth peep they :

em to make my meadow gay.  
ght to pluck and impound them,  
?

them alone, but deftly shear  
ed and reduce to—what may  
t

ren, beyond dispute ?

e 's May-month, all bloom,  
nty : what if I sacrifice ?  
with shears and shear, nor stop  
till prostrate, lo, the crop ?  
you prefer it to ginger-pop

I've made you wine of the  
mories

ave as bare as a churchyard  
nb

meadow, late all bloom ?

at ingratitude

I hesitate to amuse the wits  
ve pulled so long at my flask,  
r grudged

ache that paid their pains, nor  
dged

nghole before they sighed and  
lged

rough for our taste, to-day,  
its

and right when the years con-  
de ! "

on ingratitude !

or ingrate—none,  
rslip of all my fairy crew

lp to concoct what makes you  
nk.

to your head till you think  
a think !

I like them alive : the printer's ink  
Would sensibly tell on the perfume  
too.

I may use up my nettles, ere I 've done ;  
But of cowslips—friends get none !

Don't nettles make a broth  
Wholesome for blood grown lazy and  
thick ?

Maws out of sorts make mouths out of  
taste.

My Thirty-four Port—no need to waste  
On a tongue that 's fur and a palate—  
paste !

A magnum for friends who are sound !  
the sick—

I 'll posset and cosset them, nothing  
loth,

Henceforward with nettle-broth !  
1876.

## LA SAISIAZ

### PROLOGUE

GOOD, to forgive ;  
Best, to forget !  
Living, we fret ;  
Dying, we live.  
Fretless and free,  
Soul, clap thy pinion !  
Earth have dominion,  
Body, o'er thee !

Wander at will,  
Day after day,  
Wander away,  
Wandering still—  
Soul that canst soar !  
Body may slumber :  
Body shall cumber  
Soul-flight no more.

Waft of soul's wing !  
What lies above ?  
Sunshine and Love,  
Skyblue and Spring !  
Body hides—where ?  
Ferns of all feather,  
Mosses and heather,  
Yours be the care ! 1878.

## THE TWO POETS OF CROISIC

### PROLOGUE

SUCH a starved bank of moss  
Till, that May-morn,  
Blue ran the flash across :  
Violets were born !

Sky—what a scowl of cloud  
Till, near and far,  
Ray on ray split the shroud :  
Splendid, a star !

World—how it walled about  
Life with disgrace  
Till God's own smile came out :  
That was thy face !

## EPILOGUE

What a pretty tale you told me  
Once upon a time  
—Said you found it somewhere (scold  
me !)

Was it prose or was it rhyme,  
Greek or Latin ? Greek, you said,  
While your shoulder propped my head.

Anyhow there 's no forgetting  
This much if no more,  
That a poet (pray, no petting !)  
Yes, a bard, sir, famed of yore,  
Went where suchlike used to go,  
Singing for a prize, you know.

Well, he had to sing, nor merely  
Sing but play the lyre ;  
Playing was important clearly  
Quite as singing : I desire,  
Sir, you keep the fact in mind  
For a purpose that's behind.

There stood he, while deep attention  
Held the judges round,  
—Judges able, I should mention,  
To detect the slightest sound  
Sung or played amiss : such ears  
Had old judges, it appears !

None the less he sang out boldly,  
Played in time and tune,  
Till the judges, weighing coldly  
Each note's worth, seemed, late or  
soon,  
Sure to smile " In vain one tries  
Picking faults out : take the prize ! "

When, a mischief ! Were they seven  
Strings the lyre possessed ?  
Oh, and afterwards eleven,  
Thank you ! Well, sir,—who had  
guessed

Such ill luck in store ?—it happened  
One of those same seven strings snapped.

All was lost, then ! No ! a cricket  
(What " cicada " ? Pooh !)  
—Some mad thing that left its thicket

For mere love of music—flew  
With its little heart on fire,  
Lighted on the crippled lyre.

So that when (Ah, joy ! ) our singer  
For his truant string  
Feels with disconcerted finger,  
What does cricket else but fling  
Fiery heart forth, sound the note  
Wanted by the throbbing throat ?

Ay and, ever to the ending,  
Cricket chirps at need,  
Executes the hand's intending,  
Promptly, perfectly,—indeed  
Saves the singer from defeat  
With her chirrup low and sweet.

Till, at ending, all the judges  
Cry with one assent  
" Take the prize—a prize who grudges  
Such a voice and instrument ?  
Why, we took your lyre for harp,  
So it shrilled us forth F sharp ! "

Did the conqueror spurn the creature,  
Once its service done ?  
That 's no such uncommon feature  
In the case when Music's son  
Finds his Lotte's power too spent  
For aiding soul-development.

No ! This other, on returning  
Homeward, prize in hand,  
Satisfied his bosom's yearning :  
(Sir, I hope you understand !)  
—Said " Some record there must be  
Of this cricket's help to me ! "

So, he made himself a statue :  
Marble stood, life-size ;  
On the lyre, he pointed at you,  
Perched his partner in the prize ;  
Never more apart you found  
Her, he throned, from him, she crowned.

That 's the tale : its application ?  
Somebody I know  
Hopes one day for reputation  
Through his poetry that 's—Oh,  
All so learned and so wise  
And deserving of a prize !

If he gains one, will some ticket,  
When his statue 's built,  
Tell the gazer " 'Twas a cricket  
Helped my crippled lyre, whose lilt  
Sweet and low, when strength usurped,  
Softness' place i' the scale, she chirped !

"For as victory was nighest,  
While I sang and played,—  
With my lyre at lowest, highest,  
Right alike,—one string that made  
'Love' sound soft was snapt in twain  
Never to be heard again,—

"Had not a kind cricket fluttered,  
Perched upon the place  
Vacant left, and duly uttered  
'Love, Love, Love,' whene'er the bass  
Asked the treble to atone  
For its somewhat sombre drone."

But you don't know music! Wherefore  
Keep on casting pearls  
To a—poet? All I care for  
Is—to tell him that a girl's  
'Love' comes aptly in when gruff  
Grows his singing. (There, enough!)  
1878.

## TRAY

SING me a hero! Quench my thirst  
Of soul, ye bards!

Quoth Bard the first:  
"Sir Olaf, the good knight, did don  
His helm and eke his habergeon" . . .  
Sir Olaf and his bard!

"That sin-scathed brow" (quoth Bard  
the second),

"That eye wide ope as though Fate  
beckoned

My hero to some steep, beneath  
Which precipice smiled tempting  
death" . . .

You too without your host have reck-  
oned;

"A beggar child" (let 's hear this  
third!)

"Sat on a quay's edge: like a bird  
Sang to herself at careless play,  
And fell into the stream. 'Dismay!  
Help, you the standers-by!' None  
stirred.

"Bystanders reason, think of wives  
And children ere they risk their lives.  
Over the balustrade has bounced  
A mere instinctive dog, and pounced  
Plumb on the prize. 'How well he  
dives!

"Up he comes with the child, see,  
tight  
In mouth, alive too, clutched from quite  
A depth of ten feet—twelve, I bet!

Good dog! What, off again? There 's  
yet

Another child to save? All right!

"How strange we saw no other fall!  
It 's instinct in the animal.  
Good dog! But he's a long while under:  
If he got drowned I should not wonder—  
Strong current, that against the wall!

"Here he comes, holds in mouth this  
time

—What may the thing be? Well, that 's  
prime!

Now, did you ever? Reason reigns  
In man alone, since all Tray's pains  
Have fished—the child's doll from the  
slime!

"And so, amid the laughter gay,  
Trotted my hero off,—old Tray,—  
Till somebody, prerogated  
With reason, reasoned: 'Why he dived,  
His brain would show us, I should say.

"John, go and catch—or, if needs be,  
Purchase that animal for me!  
By vivisection, at expense  
Of half-an-hour and eighteenpence,  
How brain secretes dog's soul, we 'll  
see!" 1879.

## ECHETLOS

HERE is a story, shall stir you! Stand  
up, Greeks dead and gone,  
Who breasted, beat Barbarians, stemmed  
Persia rolling on,  
Did the deed and saved the world, for  
the day was Marathon!

No man but did his manliest, kept rank  
and fought away  
In his tribe and file: up, back, out,  
down—was the spear-arm play:  
Like a wind-whipt branchy wood, all  
spear-arms a-swing that day!

But one man kept no rank, and his sole  
arm plied no spear,  
As a flashing came and went, and a  
form i' the van, the rear,  
Brightened the battle up, for he blazed  
now there, now here.

Nor helmed nor shielded, he! but, a  
goat-skin all his wear,  
Like a tiller of the soil, with a clown's  
limbs broad and bare,  
Went he ploughing on and on: he  
pushed with a ploughman's share.

Did the weak mid-line give way, as tun-  
nies on whom the shark  
Precipitates his bulk? Did the right-  
wing halt when, stark  
On his heap of slain lay stretched Kalli-  
machos Polemarch?

Did the steady phalanx falter? To the  
rescue, at the need,  
The clown was ploughing Persia, clear-  
ing Greek earth of weed,  
As he routed through the Sakian and  
rooted up the Mede.

But the deed done, battle won,—nowhere  
to be descried  
On the meadow, by the stream, at the  
marsh,—look far and wide  
From the foot of the mountain, no, to  
the last blood-plashed sea-side,—

Not anywhere on view blazed the large  
limbs thonged and brown.  
Shearing and clearing still with the  
share before which—down  
To the dust went Persia's pomp, as he  
ploughed for Greece, that clown!

How spake the Oracle? "Care for no  
name at all!  
Say but just this: 'We praise one help-  
ful whom we call  
The Holder of the Ploughshare.' The  
great deed ne'er grows small."

Not the great name! Sing—woe for the  
great name Miltiades  
And its end at Paros isle! Woe for  
Themistokles  
—Satrap in Sardis court! Name not the  
clown like these! 1880.

#### EPILOGUE TO DRAMATIC IDYLS

"TOUCH him ne'er so lightly, into song  
he broke:  
Soil so quick-receptive,—not one feather-  
seed,  
Not one flower-dust fell but straight its  
fall awoke  
Vitalizing virtue: song would song suc-  
ceed  
Sudden as spontaneous—prove a poet-  
soul!"

Indeed?

Rock's the song-soil rather, surface  
hard and bare:  
Sun and dew their mildness, storm and  
frost their rage

Vainly both expend,—few flowers  
awaken there:  
Quiet in its cleft broods—what the after-  
age  
Knows and names a pine, a nation's  
heritage.<sup>1</sup> 1880.

#### WANTING IS—WHAT?

WANTING is—what?  
Summer redundant,  
Blueness abundant,  
—Where is the blot?  
Beamy the world, yet a blank all the  
same,  
—Framework which waits for a picture  
to frame:  
What of the leafage, what of the flower?  
Roses embowering with naught they  
embower!  
Come then, complete incompleteness, O  
comer,  
Pant through the blueness, perfect the  
summer!  
Breathe but one breath  
Rose-beauty above,  
And all that was death  
Grows life, grows love,  
Grows love! 1883.

#### ADAM, LILITH, AND EVE

ONE day, it thundered and lightened.  
Two women, fairly frightened,  
Sank to their knees, transformed, trans-  
fixed,  
At the feet of the man who sat betwixt:  
And "Mercy!" cried each—"if I tell  
the truth  
Of a passage in my youth!"

Said This: "Do you mind the morning  
I met your love with scorning?  
As the worst of the venom left my lips.  
I thought, 'If, despite this lie, he strip  
The mask from my soul with a kiss—I  
crawl  
His slave,—soul, body, and all!'"

Said that: "We stood to be married;  
The priest, or some one, tarried;

<sup>1</sup> Having been criticised for speaking thus of his  
own work (as well he might, if he chose), Brown-  
ing wrote the following lines in an album, for an  
American girl, at Venice:

Thus I wrote in London, musing on my betters,  
Poets dead and gone; and lo, the critics cried,  
"Out on such a boast!" as if I dreamed that  
fettered  
Binding Dante bind up—me! as if true pride  
Were not also humble! . . .

'If Paradise-door prove locked?' smiled  
you.

I thought, as I nodded, smiling too,  
'Did one, that's away, arrive—nor late  
Nor soon should unlock Hell's gate!'"

It ceased to lighten and thunder.  
Up started both in wonder.  
Looked round and saw that the sky was  
clear,  
Then laughed "Confess you believed  
us, Dear!"  
"I saw through the joke!" the man  
replied.  
They re-seated themselves beside.

1883.

#### NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE

NEVER the time and the place  
And the loved one all together!  
This path—how soft to pace!  
This May—what magic weather!  
Where is the loved one's face?  
In a dream that loved one's face meets  
mine,

But the house is narrow, the place is  
bleak  
Where, outside, rain and wind combine  
With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,  
With a hostile eye at my flushing  
cheek,  
With a malice that marks each word,  
each sign!

O enemy sly and serpentine,  
Uncoil thee from the waking man!  
Do I hold the Past  
Thus firm and fast  
Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?  
This path so soft to pace shall lead  
Through the magic of May to herself  
indeed!  
Or narrow if needs the house must be,  
Outside are the storms and strangers:  
we—  
Oh, close, safe, warm, sleep I and she,  
I and she.

1883.

#### SONGS FROM FERISHTAH'S FANCIES

ROUND us the wild creatures, overhead  
the trees,  
Underfoot the moss-tracks,—life and  
love with these!  
I to wear a fawn-skin, thou to dress in  
flowers:  
All the long lone summer-day, that  
greenwood life of ours!

Rich-pavilioned, rather,—still the world  
without,—

Inside—gold-roofed silk-walled silence  
round about!

Queen it thou on purple,—I, at watch  
and ward,  
Couched beneath the columns, gaze, thy  
slave, love's guard!

So, for us no world? Let throngs press  
thee to me!

Up and down amid men, heart by heart  
fare we!

Welcome squalid vesture, harsh voice,  
hateful face!

God is soul, souls I and thou: with souls  
should souls have place.

Wish no word unspoken, want no look  
away!

What if words were but mistake, and  
looks—too sudden, say!

Be unjust for once. Love! Bear it—well  
I may!

Do me justice always? Bid my heart—  
their shrine—

Render back its store of gifts, old looks  
and words of thine

—Oh, so all unjust—the less deserved,  
the more divine?

Fire is in the flint: true, once a spark  
escapes.

Fire forgets the kinship, soars till fancy  
shapes

Some befitting cradle where the babe  
had birth—

Wholly heaven's the product, unallied  
to earth.

Splendors recognized as perfect in the  
star!

In our flint their home was, housed as  
now they are.

Verse-making was least of my virtues:  
I viewed with despair

Wealth that never yet was but might  
be—all that verse-making were

If the life would but lengthen to wish,  
let the mind be laid bare.

So I said "To do little is bad, to do  
nothing is worse"—

And made verse.

Love-making,—how simple a matter!  
 No depths to explore,  
 No heights in a life to ascend! No dis-  
 heartening Before,  
 No affrighting Hereafter,—love now will  
 be love evermore.  
 So I felt "To keep silence were folly:"  
 —all language above,  
 I made love.

Ask not one least word of praise!  
 Words declare your eyes are bright?  
 What then meant that summer day's  
 Silence spent in one long gaze?  
 Was my silence wrong or right?

Words of praise were all to seek!  
 Face of you and form of you,  
 Did they find the praise so weak  
 When my lips just touched your cheek—  
 Touch which let my soul come through?

"Why from the world," Ferishtah  
 smiled, "should thanks  
 Go to this work of mine? If worthy  
 praise,  
 Praised let it be and welcome: as verse  
 ranks,  
 So rate my verse: if good therein out-  
 weighs  
 Aught faulty judged, judge justly!  
 Justice says:  
 Be just to fact, or blaming or approving:  
 But—generous? No, nor loving!

"Loving! what claim to love has work  
 of mine?  
 Concede my life were emptied of its  
 gains  
 To furnish forth and fill work's strict  
 confine,  
 Who works so for the world's sake—  
 he complains  
 With cause when hate, not love,  
 rewards his pains.  
 I looked beyond the world for truth and  
 beauty:  
 Sought, found, and did my duty."  
 1884.

#### WHY I AM A LIBERAL

"WHY?" Because all I haply can and do,  
 All that I am now, all I hope to be,—  
 Whence comes it save from fortune set-  
 ting free

Body and soul the purpose to pursue,  
 God traced for both? If fetters not a  
 few,  
 Of prejudice, convention, fall from me,  
 These shall I bid men—each in his  
 degree  
 Also God-guided—bear, and gayly, too?

But little do or can the best of us:  
 That little is achieved through Liberty.  
 Who, then, dares hold, emancipated  
 thus,  
 His fellow shall continue bound? Not I,  
 Who live, love, labor freely, nor discuss  
 A brother's right to freedom. That is  
 "Why."  
 1885.

#### ROSNY

WOE, he went galloping into the war,  
 Clara, Clara!  
 Let us two dream: shall he 'scape with  
 a scar?

Scarcely disfigurement, rather a grace  
 Making for manhood which nowise we  
 mar:  
 See, while I kiss it, the flush on his  
 face—  
 Rosny, Rosny!

Light does he laugh: "With your love  
 in my soul"  
 (Clara, Clara!)

"How could I other than—sound, safe,  
 and whole—

Cleave who opposed me asunder, yet  
 stand  
 Scatheless beside you, as, touching  
 love's goal,  
 Who won the race kneels, craves re-  
 ward at your hand—  
 Rosny, Rosny?"

Ay, but if certain who envied should  
 see!

Clara, Clara,  
 Certain who simper: "The hero for me  
 Hardly of life were so chary as miss  
 Death—death and fame—that's love's  
 guerdon when She  
 Boasts, proud bereaved one, her choice  
 fell on this  
 Rosny, Rosny!"

So,—go on dreaming,—he lies mid a  
 heap  
 (Clara, Clara.)  
 Of the slain by his hand: what is death  
 but a sleep?



Dead, with my portrait displayed on  
his breast:  
Love wrought his undoing: "No pru-  
dence could keep  
The love-maddened wretch from his  
fate." That is best,  
Rosny. Rosny! 1889.

## POETICS

"So say the foolish!" Say the foolish  
so, Love?  
"Flower she is, my rose"—or else,  
"My very swan is she"—  
Or perhaps, "Yon maid-moon, blessing  
earth below, Love,  
That art thou!"—to them, belike: no  
such vain words from me.

"Hush, rose, blush! no balm like  
breath," I chide it:  
"Bend thy neck its best, swan,—hers  
the whiter curve!"  
Be the moon the moon: my Love I place  
beside it:  
What is she? Her human self,—no  
lower word will serve. 1889.

## SUMMUM BONUM

ALL the breath and the bloom of the  
year in the bag of one bee:  
All the wonder and wealth of the mine  
in the heart of one gem:  
In the core of one pearl all the shade  
and the shine of the sea:  
Breath and bloom, shade and shine.—  
wonder, wealth, and—how far  
above them—  
Truth, that's brighter than gem,  
Trust, that's purer than pearl—  
Brightest truth, purest trust in the  
universe—all were for me  
In the kiss of one girl. 1889.

## A PEARL, A GIRL

A SIMPLE ring with a single stone,  
To the vulgar eye no stone of price:  
Whisper the right word, that alone—  
Forth starts a sprite, like fire from ice,  
And lo, you are lord (says an Eastern  
scroll) [sole  
Of heaven and earth, lord whole and  
Through the power in a pearl.

A woman ('t is I this time that say)  
With little the world counts worthy  
praise:

Utter the true word—out and away  
Escapes her soul: I am wrapt in blaze,  
Creation's lord, of heaven and earth  
Lord whole and sole—by a minute's  
birth—  
Through the love in a girl! 1889.

## MUCKLE-MOUTH MEG

FROWNED the Laird on the Lord: "So,  
redhanded I catch thee?  
Death-doomed by our Law of the  
Border!  
We've a gallows outside and a chiel to  
dispatch thee:  
Who trespasses—hangs: all 's in  
order."

He met frown with smile, did the young  
English gallant:  
Then the Laird's dame: "Nay, Hus-  
band, I beg!  
He's comely: be merciful! Grace for  
the callant  
—If he marries our Muckle-mouth  
Meg!

"No mile-wide-mouthed monster of  
yours do I marry:  
Grant rather the gallows!" laughed he.  
"Foul fare kith and kin of you—why do  
you tarry?"  
"To tame your fierce temper!" quoth  
she.

"Shove him quick in the Hole, shut him  
fast for a week:  
Cold, darkness, and hunger work  
wonders:  
Who lion-like roars now, mouse-fashion  
will squeak,  
And 'it rains' soon succeed to 'it thun-  
ders.'"

A week did he bide in the cold and the  
dark  
—Not hunger: for duly at morning  
In flitted a lass, and a voice like a lark  
Chirped, "Muckle-mouth Meg still  
ye're scorning?"

"Go hang, but here 's parritch to heart-  
en ye first!"  
"Did Meg's muckle-mouth boast  
within some  
Such music as yours, mine should match  
it or burst:  
No frog-jaws! So tell folk, my Win-  
some!"



Soon week came to end, and, from Hole's  
door set wide,  
Out he marched, and there waited the  
lassie :  
"Yon gallows, or Muckle-mouth Meg  
for a bride!  
Consider! Sky's blue and turf's  
grassy :

"Life's sweet: shall I say ye wed  
Muckle-mouth Meg?"  
"Not I," quoth the stout heart: "too  
erie  
The mouth that can swallow a bubbly-  
jock's egg;  
Shall I let it munch mine? Never,  
Dearie!"

"Not Muckle-mouth Meg? Wow, the  
obstinate man!  
Perhaps he would rather wed me!"  
"Ay, would he—with just for a dowry  
your can!"  
"I'm Muckle-mouth Meg," chirruped  
she.

"Then so—so—so—so—" as he kissed her  
apace—  
"Will I widen thee out till thou  
turnest  
From Margaret Minnikin-mou', by God's  
grace,  
To Muckle-mouth Meg in good  
earnest!" 1889.

#### DEVELOPMENT

My Father was a scholar and knew  
Greek.  
When I was five years old, I asked him  
once  
"What do you read about?"  
"The siege of Troy."  
"What is a siege, and what is Troy?"  
Whereat  
He piled up chairs and tables for a town,  
Set me a-top for Priam, called our cat  
—Helen, enticed away from home (he  
said)  
By wicked Paris, who couched some-  
where close  
Under the footstool, being cowardly,  
But whom—since she was worth the  
pains, poor puss—  
Towzer and Tray,—our dogs, the Atrei-  
dal,—sought  
By taking Troy to get possession of  
—Always when great Achilles ceased to  
sulk,

(My pony in the stable)—forth would  
prance  
And put to flight Hector—our page-boy's  
self.  
This taught me who was who and what  
was what:  
So far I rightly understood the case  
At five years old; a huge delight it  
proved  
And still proves—thanks to that in-  
structor sage  
My Father, who knew better than tan  
straight  
Learning's full flare on weak-eyed igno-  
rance,  
Or, worse yet, leave weak eyes to grow  
sand-blind,  
Content with darkness and vacuity.

It happened, two or three years after-  
ward,  
That—I and playmates playing at Troy's  
Siege—  
My Father came upon our make-believe.  
"How would you like to read yourself  
the tale  
Properly told, of which I gave you first  
Merely such notion as a boy could  
bear?  
Pope, now, would give you the precise  
account  
Of what, some day, by dint of scholar-  
ship,  
You 'll hear—who knows?—from  
Homer's very mouth.  
Learn Greek by all means, read the 'Blind  
Old Man,  
Sweetest of Singers'—*tuphlos* which  
means 'blind,'  
*Hedistos* which means 'sweetest'. Time  
enough!  
Try, anyhow, to master him some day:  
Until when, take what serves for sub-  
stitute,  
Read Pope, by all means!"

So I ran through Pope.  
Enjoyed the tale—what history so true?  
Also attacked my Primer, duly drudged,  
Grew fitter thus for what was promised  
next—  
The very thing itself, the actual words.  
When I could turn—say, Buttman to  
account.

Time passed, I ripened somewhat: one  
fine day,  
"Quite ready for the Iliad, nothing less!"  
There's Heine, where the big books block  
the shelf:

Don't skip a word, thumb well, the  
Lexicon!"

I thumbed well and skipped nowise till I  
learned

Who was who, what was what, from  
Homer's tongue,

And there an end of learning. Had you  
asked

The all-accomplished scholar, twelve  
years old,

"Who was it wrote the Iliad?"—what a  
laugh!

"Why, Homer, all the world knows: of  
his life

Doubtless some facts exist: it's every-  
where:

We have not settled, though, his place of  
birth:

He begged, for certain, and was blind  
beside:

Seven cities claimed him—Scio, with  
best right,

Thinks Byron. What he wrote? Those  
Hymns we have.

Then there's the 'Battle of the Frogs  
and Mice,'

That's all—unless they dig 'Margites' up  
(I'd like that) nothing more remains to  
know."

Thus did youth spend a comfortable  
time:

Until—"What's this the Germans say in  
fact

That Wolf found out first? It's un-  
pleasant work

Their chop and change, unsettling one's  
belief:

All the same, where we live, we learn,  
that's sure."

So, I bent brow o'er *Prolegomena*.

And after Wolf, a dozen of his like

Proved there was never any Troy at all,  
Neither Besiegers nor Besieged,—nay,

worse,—

No actual Homer, no authentic text,

No warrant for the fiction I, as fact,

Had treasured in my heart and soul so  
long—

Ay, mark you! and as fact held still,  
still hold,

Spite of new knowledge, in my heart of  
hearts

And soul of souls, fact's essence freed and  
fixed

From accidental fancy's guardian sheath.

Assuredly thenceforward—thank my  
stars!—

However it got there, deprive who  
could—

Wring from the shrine my precious ten-  
antry,

Helen, Ulysses, Hector and his Spouse,  
Achilles and his Friend?—though Wolf

—ah, Wolf!

Why must he needs come doubting, spoil  
a dream?

But then, "No dream's worth waking"—  
Browning says:

And here 's the reason why I tell thus  
much.

I, now mature man, you anticipate,  
May blame my Father justifiably

For letting me dream out my nonage  
thus,

And only by such slow and sure degrees  
Permitting me to sift the grain from

chaff,

Get truth and falsehood known and  
named as such.

Why did he ever let me dream at all,  
Not bid me taste the story in its strength?

Suppose my childhood was scarce quali-  
fied

To rightly understand mythology,  
Silence at least was in his power to keep:

I might have—somehow—correspond-  
ingly—

Well, who knows by what method,  
gained my gains,

Been taught, by forthrights not meand-  
erings,

My aim should be to loathe, like Peleus'  
son,

A lie as Hell's Gate, love my wedded  
wife,

Like Hector, and so on with all the rest.  
Could not I have excogitated this

Without believing such men really were?  
That is—he might have put into my

hand

The "Ethics"? In translation, if you  
please,

Exact, no pretty lying that improves,  
To suit the modern taste: no more, no

less—

The "Ethics": 't is a treatise I find hard  
To read aright now that my hair is gray,

And I can manage the original.  
At five years old—how ill had fared its

leaves!

Now, growing double o'er the Stagirite,  
At least I soil no page with bread and

milk,  
Nor crumple, dogs-ear and deface—boys'  
way.

## EPILOGUE

At the midnight in the silence of the  
sleep-time,

When you set your fancies free,  
Will they pass to where—by death, fools  
think, imprisoned—

Low he lies who once so loved you, whom  
you loved so,

—Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mis-  
taken!

What had I on earth to do  
With the slothful, with the mawkish,  
the unmanly?

Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I  
drivel

—Being—who?

One who never turned his back but  
marched breast forward,

Never doubted clouds would break,  
Never dreamed, though right were  
worsted, wrong would triumph.

Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight  
better,

Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's  
work-time

Greet the unseen with a cheer!  
Bid him forward, breast and back  
either should be,

"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed  
fight on, fare ever  
There as here!"

1888

# CLOUGH

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III.

## CLOUGH

### IN A LECTURE-ROOM

AWAY, haunt thou not me,  
Thou vain Philosophy !  
Little hast thou bestead,  
Save to perplex the head,  
And leave the spirit dead.  
Unto thy broken cisterns wherefore go,  
While from the secret treasure-depths  
below,  
Fed by the skiey shower,  
And clouds that sink and rest on hill-  
tops high,  
Wisdom at once, and Power,  
Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen,  
incessantly ?  
Why labor at the dull mechanic oar,  
When the fresh breeze is blowing,  
And the strong current flowing,  
Right onward to the Eternal Shore ?  
1840. 1849.

### BLANK MISGIVINGS

How often sit I, poring o'er  
My strange distorted youth,  
Seeking in vain, in all my store,  
One feeling based on truth ;  
Amid the maze of petty life,  
A clue whereby to move,  
A spot whereon in toil and strife  
To dare to rest and love.  
So constant as my heart would be,  
So fickle as it must,  
'T were well for others as for me  
'T were dry as summer dust.  
Excitements come, and act and speech  
Flow freely forth ;—but no,  
Nor they, nor aught beside can reach  
The buried world below.  
1841. 1849.

*τὸ χαλόν*

I HAVE seen higher, holier things than  
these.  
And therefore must to these refuse  
my heart,

Yet am I panting for a little ease ;  
I'll take, and so depart.

Ah, hold ! the heart is prone to fall  
away,  
Her high and cherished visions to for-  
get,  
And if thou takest, how wilt thou re-  
pay  
So vast, so dread a debt ?

How will the heart, which now thou  
trustest, then  
Corrupt, yet in corruption mindful  
yet,  
Turn with sharp stings upon itself !  
Again,  
Bethink thee of the debt !

—Hast thou seen higher, holier things  
than these,  
And therefore must to these thy heart  
refuse ?  
With the true best, alack, how ill  
agrees  
That best that thou would'st choose !

The Summum Pulchrum rests in heaven  
above ;  
Do thou, as best thou may'st, thy duty  
do :  
Amid the things allowed thee live and  
love ;  
Some day thou shalt it view.  
1841. 1849.

### QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay  
With canvas drooping, side by side,  
Two towers of sail at dawn of day  
Are scarce long leagues apart descried ;

When fell the night, upsprung the  
breeze,  
And all the darkling hours they plied.  
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas  
By each was cleaving, side by side :

E'en so, but why the tale reveal  
Of those, whom year by year un-  
changed,  
Brief absence joined anew to feel,  
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,  
And onward each rejoicing steered—  
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,  
Or wist, what first with dawn ap-  
peared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,  
Brave barks! In light, in darkness  
too,  
Through winds and tides one compass  
guides—  
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,  
Though ne'er, that earliest parting  
past,  
On your wide plain they join again,  
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,  
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—  
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!  
At last, at last, unite them there!

1849.

## THE NEW SINAI

Lo, here is God, and there is God!  
Believe it not, O Man;  
In such vain sort to this and that  
The ancient heathen ran:  
Though old Religion shake her head,  
And say in bitter grief,  
The day behold, at first foretold,  
Of atheist unbelief:  
Take better part, with manly heart,  
Thine adult spirit can;  
Receive it not, believe it not,  
Believe it not, O Man!

As men at dead of night awaked  
With cries, "The king is here,"  
Rush forth and greet whome'er they  
meet,  
Whoe'er shall first appear;  
And still repeat, to all the street,  
" 'Tis he,—the king is here;"  
The long procession moveth on,  
Each nobler form they see,  
With changeful suit they still salute  
And cry, " 'Tis he, 'tis he!"

So, even so, when men were young,  
And earth and heaven were new,

And His immediate presence He  
From human hearts withdrew,  
The soul perplexed and daily vexed  
With sensuous False and True,  
Amazed, bereaved, no less believed,  
And fain would see Him too:  
"He is!" the prophet-tongues pro-  
claimed;  
In joy and hasty fear,  
"He is!" aloud replied the crowd,  
"Is here, and here, and here."

"He is! They are!" in distance seen  
On yon Olympus high,  
In those Avernian woods abide  
And walk this azure sky:  
"They are! They are!"—to every  
show

Its eyes the baby turned,  
And blazes sacrificial, tall,  
On thousand altars burned:  
"They are! They are!"—On Sinai's top  
Far seen the lightnings shone,  
The thunder broke, a trumpet spoke,  
And God said, "I am One."

God spake it out, "I, God, am One;"  
The unheeding ages ran,  
And baby-thoughts again, again,  
Have dogged the growing man:  
And as of old from Sinai's top  
God said that God is One,  
By Science strict so speaks He now  
To tell us, There is None!  
Earth goes by chemic forces; Heaven's  
A Mécanique Céleste!  
And heart and mind of human kind  
A watch-work as the rest!

Is this a Voice, as was the Voice,  
Whose speaking told abroad,  
When thunder pealed, and mountain  
reeled,  
The ancient truth of God?  
Ah, not the Voice; 'tis but the cloud,  
The outer-darkness dense,  
Where image none, nor e'er was seen  
Similitude of sense.  
'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense  
That wrapt the Mount around;  
While in amaze the people stays,  
To hear the Coming Sound.

Is there no prophet-soul the while  
To dare, sublimely meek,  
Within the shroud of blackest cloud  
The Deity to seek?  
'Midst atheistic systems dark,  
And darker hearts' despair,  
That soul has heard perchance His word,

And on the dusky air  
His skirts, as passed He by, to see  
Hath strained on their behalf,  
Who on the plain, with dance amain,  
Adore the Golden Calf.

'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense ;  
Though blank the tale it tells,  
No God, no Truth ! yet He, in sooth,  
Is there—within it dwells ;  
Within the sceptic darkness deep  
He dwells that none may see,  
Till idol forms and idle thoughts  
Have passed and ceased to be :  
No God, no Truth ! ah though, in sooth  
So stand the doctrine's half :  
On Egypt's track return not back,  
Nor own the Golden Calf.

Take better part, with manlier heart,  
Thine adult spirit can ;  
No God, no Truth, receive it ne'er—  
Believe it ne'er—O Man !  
But turn not then to seek again  
What first the ill began ;  
No God, it saith ; ah, wait in faith  
God's self-completing plan ;  
Receive it not, but leave it not,  
And wait it out, O man !

"The Man that went the cloud within  
Is gone and vanished quite ;  
He cometh not," the people cries,  
"Nor bringeth God to sight :  
Lo these thy gods, that safety give,  
Adore and keep the feast !"   
Deluding and deluded cries  
The Prophet's brother-Priest :  
And Israel all bows down to fall  
Before the gilded beast.

Devout, indeed ! that priestly creed,  
O Man, reject as sin ;  
The clouded hill attend thou still,  
And him that went within.  
He yet shall bring some worthy thing  
For waiting souls to see :  
Some sacred word that he hath heard  
Their light and life shall be ;  
Some lofty part, than which the heart  
Adopt no nobler can,  
Thou shalt receive, thou shalt believe  
And thou shalt do, O Man !

1845. 1869.

#### THE QUESTIONING SPIRIT

The human spirits saw I on a day,  
Sitting and looking each a different way ;  
And hardly tasking, subtly questioning,

Another spirit went around the ring  
To each and each : and as he ceased his  
say,  
Each after each, I heard them singly  
sing,  
Some querulously high, some softly,  
sadly low,  
We know not—what avails to know ?  
We know not—wherefore need we know ?  
This answer gave they still unto hissing.  
We know not, let us do as we are doing.  
Dost thou not know that these things  
only seem ?—  
I know not, let me dream my dream.  
Are dust and ashes fit to make a  
treasure ?—

I know not, let me take my pleasure.  
What shall avail the knowledge thou hast  
sought ?—  
I know not, let me think my thought.  
What is the end of strife ?—  
I know not, let me live my life.  
How many days or e'er thou mean'st to  
move ?—  
I know not, let me love my love.  
Were not things old once new ?—  
I know not, let me do as others do.  
And when the rest were over past,  
I know not, I will do my duty, said the  
last.

Thy duty do ? rejoined the voice,  
Ah, do it, do it, and rejoice ;  
But shalt thou then, when all is done,  
Enjoy a love, embrace a beauty  
Like these, that may be seen and won  
In life, whose course will then be run ;  
Or wilt thou be where there is none ?  
I know not, I will do my duty.

And taking up the word around, above,  
below,  
Some querulously high, some softly,  
sadly low,  
We know not, sang they all, nor ever  
need we know.  
We know not, sang they, what avails to  
know ?  
Whereat the questioning spirit, some  
short space,  
Though unabashed, stood quiet in his  
place.  
But as the echoing chorus died away  
And to their dreams the rest returned  
apace,  
By the one spirit I saw him kneeling  
low,  
And in a silvery whisper heard him say :

Truly, thou know'st not, and thou  
need'st not know ;  
Hope only, hope thou, and believe al-  
way ;  
I also know not, and I need not know,  
Only with questionings pass I to and  
fro,  
Perplexing these that sleep, and in their  
folly  
Imbreeding doubt and sceptic melan-  
choly ;  
Till that, their dreams deserting, they  
with me  
Come all to this true ignorance and  
thee. 1847. 1862.

## BETHESDA

## A SEQUEL

I SAW again the spirits on a day,  
Where on the earth in mournful case  
they lay ;  
Five porches were there, and a pool, and  
round,  
Huddling in blankets, strewn upon the  
ground.  
Tied-up and bandaged, weary, sore and  
spent,  
The maimed and halt, diseased and im-  
potent.

For a great angel came, 't was said, and  
stirred  
The pool at certain seasons, and the  
word  
Was, with this people of the sick, that  
they  
Who in the waters here their limbs  
should lay  
Before the motion on the surface ceased  
Should of their torment straightway be  
released.  
So with shrunk bodies and with heads  
down-dropped,  
Stretched on the steps, and at the pil-  
lars propped,  
Watching by day and listening through  
the night,  
They filled the place, a miserable sight.

And I beheld that on the stony floor  
He too, that spoke of duty once before,  
No otherwise than others here to-day,  
Foredone and sick and sadly muttering  
lay.

" I know not, I will do—what is it I  
would say :

What was that word which once suf-  
ficed alone for all,

Which now I seek in vain, and never  
can recall ? "

And then, as weary of in vain renew-  
ing

His question, thus his mournful thought  
pursuing,

" I know not, I must do as other men  
are doing."

But what the waters of that pool might  
be,

Of Lethe were they, or Philosophy ;  
And whether he, long waiting, did at-  
tain

Deliverance from the burden of his pain  
There with the rest ; or whether, yet  
before,

Some more diviner stranger passed the  
door

With his small company into that sad  
place,

And breathing hope into the sick man's  
face, [go,

Bade him take up his bed, and rise and  
What the end were, and whether it  
were so,

Further than this I saw not, neither  
know. 1849. 1862.

## FROM AMOURS DE VOYAGE

## EN ROUTE

*Over the great windy waters, and over  
the clear-crested summits,*

*Unto the sun and the sky, and unto the  
perfecter earth,*

*Come, let us go,—to a land wherein gods  
of the old time wandered,*

*Where every breath even now changes  
to ether divine.*

*Come let us go;: though withal a voice  
whisper, " The world that we live in,*

*Whithersoever we turn, still is the same  
narrow crib ;*

*'Tis but to prove limitation, and measure  
a cord, that we travel ;*

<sup>1</sup> Clough's long poem in hexameters, *The  
Bohémie of Tober-Na-Tuolich*, interesting as it is,  
is of too little importance and poetic value in  
proportion to its length, to be included in these  
selections ; and no parts of it are detachable as  
extracts. Some examples of Clough's use of  
hexameters (and elegiacs) may however be taken  
from his other long poem, the *Amours de Voy-  
age*, which suffer comparatively little in being  
separated from their context, and are equally  
characteristic of some of Clough's moods. They  
are also interesting as a contrast to Byron's  
verses on Rome, in *Childe Harold* and elsewhere.  
On the *Amours de Voyage*, see especially Bage-  
hot's Essay on Clough.



*Let who would 'scape and be free go to  
his chamber and think ;  
'Tis but to change idle fancies for  
memories wilfully false ;  
'Tis but to go and have been."*—Come,  
little bark! let us go.

## ROME

ROME disappoints me still ; but I shrink  
and adapt myself to it.  
Somehow a tyrannous sense of a super-  
incumbent oppression  
Still, wherever I go, accompanies ever,  
and makes me  
Feel like a tree (shall I say?) buried  
under a ruin of brickwork  
Rome, believe me, my friend, is like its  
own Monte Testaceo,  
Merely a marvelous mass of broken and  
castaway wine-pots.  
Ye gods! what do I want with this rub-  
bish of ages departed,  
Things that Nature abhors, the experi-  
ments that she has failed in?  
What do I find in the Forum? An arch-  
way and two or three pillars.  
Well, but St. Peter's? Alas, Bernini  
has filled it with sculpture!  
No one can cavil, I grant, at the size of  
the great Coliseum.  
Doubtless the notion of grand and capa-  
cious and massive amusement,  
This the old Romans had; but tell me,  
is this an idea?  
Yet of solidity much, but of splendor  
little is extant:  
"Brickwork I found thee, and marble I  
left thee!" their Emperor vaunted;  
"Marble I thought thee, and brickwork  
I find thee!" the Tourist may answer.

## THE PANTHEON

No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not  
Christian! canst not,  
Strip and replaster and daub and do  
what they will with thee, be so!  
Here underneath the great porch of  
colossal Corinthian columns,  
Here as I walk, do I dream of the Chris-  
tian belfries above them?  
Or, on a bench as I sit and abide for long  
hours, till thy whole vast  
Round grows dim as in dreams to my  
eyes, I repeople thy niches,  
Not with the Martyrs, and Saints, and  
Confessors, and Virgins, and children,  
But with the mightier forms of an older,  
austerer worship;

And I recite to myself, how  
Eager for battle here  
Stood Vulcan, here matronal Juno,  
And with the bow to his shoulder  
faithful  
He, who with pure dew laveth of Castaly  
His flowing locks, who holdeth of Lycia  
The oak forest and the wood that bore  
him,  
Delos' and Patara's own Apollo.

## ON MONTORIO'S HEIGHT

TIBUR is beautiful, too, and the orchard  
slopes, and the Anio  
Falling, falling yet, to the ancient lyr-  
ical cadence;  
Tibur and Anio's tide; and cool from  
Lucretilis ever,  
With the Digentian stream, and with  
the Bandusian fountain,  
Folded in Sabine recesses, the valley and  
villa of Horace:—  
So not seeing I sang; so seeing and lis-  
tening say I,  
Here as I sit by the stream, as I gaze at  
the cell of the Sibyl.  
Here with Albunea's home and the grove  
of Tiburnus beside me;  
Tivoli beautiful is, and musical, O Ter-  
erone,  
Dashing from mountain to plain, thy  
parted impetuous waters,  
Tivoli's waters and rocks; and fair unto  
Monte Gennaro  
(Haunt, even yet, I must think, as I  
wander and gaze, of the shadows,  
Faded and pale, yet immortal, of Faunus,  
the Nymphs, and the Graces).  
Fair in itself, and yet fairer with human  
completing creations,  
Folded in Sabine recesses the valley and  
villa of Horace:—  
So not seeing I sang; so now—Nor see-  
ing, nor hearing,  
Neither by waterfall lulled, nor folded  
in sylvan embraces,  
Neither by cell of the Sibyl, nor stepping  
the Monte Gennaro,  
Seated on Anio's bank, nor sipping  
Bandusian waters,  
But on Montorio's height, looking down  
on the tile-clad streets, the  
Cupolas, crosses, and domes, the bushes  
and kitchen-gardens,  
Which, by the grace of the Tibur, pre-  
claim themselves Rome of the  
Romans.—  
But on Montorio's height, looking forth  
to the vapory mountains,

Cheating the prisoner Hope with illusions of vision and fancy,—  
But on Montorio's height, with these weary soldiers by me,  
Waiting till Oudinot enter, to reinstate Pope and Tourist.

## THE REAL QUESTION

*Action will furnish belief*,—but will that belief be the true one?  
This is the point, you know. However, it doesn't much matter.  
What one wants, I suppose, is to pre-  
-termine the action,  
So as to make it entail, not a chance belief, but the true one.  
*Out of the question*, you say; *if a thing isn't wrong we may do it*.  
Ah! but this *wrong*, you see—but I do not know that it matters. . . .

## SCEPTIC MOODS

ROME is fallen, I hear, the gallant Medici taken,  
Noble Manara slain, and Garibaldi has lost *il Moro* ;—  
Rome is fallen ; and fallen, or falling, heroic Venice.  
I, meanwhile, for the loss of a single small chit of a girl, sit  
Moping and mourning here,—for her, and myself much smaller.  
Whither depart the souls of the brave that die in the battle,  
Die in the lost, lost fight, for the cause that perishes with them?  
Are they upborne from the field on the slumberous pinions of angels  
Unto a far-off home, where the weary rest from their labor,  
And the deep wounds are healed, and the bitter and burning moisture  
Wiped from the generous eyes? or do they linger, unhappy,  
Pining, and haunting the grave of their by-gone hope and endeavor?  
All declamation, alas! though I talk,  
I care not for Rome nor  
Italy; feebly and faintly, and but with the lips, can lament the  
Wreck of the Lombard youth, and the victory of the oppressor.  
Whither depart the brave!—God knows; I certainly do not.

## ENVOI

*So go forth to the world, to the good report and the evil!*

*Go, little book! thy tale, is it not evil and good?*  
*Go, and if strangers revile, pass quietly by without answer.*  
*Go, and if curious friends ask of thy rearing and age.*  
*Say, "I am flitting about many years from brain unto brain of*  
*Feeble and restless youths born to inglorious days:*  
*But," so finish the word, "I was writ in a Roman chamber,*  
*When from Janiculan heights thundered the cannon of France."*  
1848-1849. 1858.

## PESCHIERA

WHAT voice did on my spirit fall,  
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost?  
" 'Tis better to have fought and lost.  
Than never to have fought at all."

The tricolor—a trampled rag—  
Lies, dirt and dust; the lines I track  
By sentry boxes yellow-black,  
Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand  
Upon the grass of your redoubts;  
The eagle with his black wings flouts  
The breadth and beauty of your land.

Yet not in vain, although in vain,  
O men of Brescia, on the day  
Of loss past hope, I heard you say  
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You say, "Since so it is,—good-bye  
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe'er  
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare  
To tell, 'The Lombard feared to die!'"

You said (there shall be answer fit),  
"And if our children must obey,  
They must: but thinking on this day  
'Twill less debase them to submit."

You said (Oh not in vain you said),  
"Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we may;  
The hours ebb fast of this one day  
When blood may yet be nobly shed."

Ah! not for idle hatred, not  
For honor, fame, nor self-applause,  
But for the glory of the cause,  
You did, what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 'tis true,  
By force and fortune's right he stands;

By fortune, which is in God's hands,  
And strength, which yet shall spring in  
you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,  
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,  
" 'Tis better to have fought and lost,  
Than never to have fought at all."

1849. 1862.

#### ALTERAM PARTEM

OR shall I say, Vain word, false thought,  
Since Prudence hath her martyrs too,  
And Wisdom dictates not to do,  
Till doing shall be not for nought?

Not ours to give or lose is life;  
Will Nature, when her brave ones fall,  
Remake her work? or songs recall  
Death's victim slain in useless strife?

That rivers flow into the sea  
Is loss and waste, the foolish say,  
Nor know that back they find their way,  
Unseen, to where they went to be.

Showers fall upon the hills, springs flow,  
The river runneth still at hand,  
Brave men are born into the land,  
And whence the foolish do not know.

No! no vain voice did on me fall,  
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,  
" 'T is better to have fought and lost,  
Than never to have fought at all."

1849. 1862.

#### IN THE DEPTHS

It is not sweet content, be sure,  
That moves the nobler Muse to song,  
Yet when could truth come whole and  
pure  
From hearts that inly writhe with  
wrong?

'T is not the calm and peaceful breast  
That sees or reads the problem true;  
They only know, on whom 't has prest  
Too hard to hope to solve it too.

Our ills are worse than at their ease  
These blameless happy souls suspect,  
They only study the disease,  
Alas, who live not to detect. 1862.

#### THE LATEST DECALOGUE

THOU shalt have one God only; who  
Would be at the expense of two?

No graven images may be  
Worshipped, except the currency:  
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse  
Thine enemy is none the worse:  
At church on Sunday to attend  
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:  
Honor thy parents: that is, all  
From whom advancement may befall:  
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not  
strive

Officiously to keep alive:  
Do not adultery commit;  
Advantage rarely comes of it:  
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,  
When it's so lucrative to cheat:  
Bear not false witness; let the lie  
Have time on its own wings to fly:  
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition  
Approves all forms of competition.

1862.

#### FROM DIPSYCHUS

"THERE is no God," the wicked saith,  
"And truly it's a blessing,  
For what He might have done with us  
It's better only guessing."

"There is no God," a youngster thinks,  
"Or really, if there may be,  
He surely did not mean a man  
Always to be a baby."

"There is no God, or if there is,"  
The tradesman thinks, "'t were funny  
If He should take it ill in me  
To make a little money."

"Whether there be," the rich man says,  
"It matters very little,  
For I and mine, thank somebody,  
Are not in want of victual."

Some others, also, to themselves,  
Who scarce so much as doubt it,  
Think there is none, when they are well  
And do not think about it.

But country folks who live beneath  
The shadow of the steeple;  
The parson and the parson's wife,  
And mostly married people;

Youths green and happy in first love,  
So thankful for illusion;  
And men caught out in what the world  
Calls guilt, in first confusion;

And almost every one when age,  
Disease, or sorrows strike him,

Inclines to think there is a God,  
Or something very like Him.  
1849. 1862.

Our gaities, our luxuries,  
Our pleasures and our glee,  
Mere insolence and wantonness,  
Alas! they feel to me.

How shall I laugh and sing and dance?  
My very heart recoils,  
While here to give my mirth a chance  
A hungry brother toils.

The joy that does not spring from joy  
Which I in others see,  
How can I venture to employ,  
Or find it joy for me? 1849. 1869.

This world is very odd we see,  
We do not comprehend it;  
But in one fact we all agree,  
God won't, and we can't mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin  
To take it as I find it;  
The pleasure to take pleasure in;  
The pain, try not to mind it.

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,  
May be an unreal mere appearance;  
Only—for my inside, in fine,  
They have a singular coherence.

Oh yes, my pensive youth, abstain;  
And any empty sick sensation,  
Remember, anything like pain  
Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage  
To far more purpose e'er than you did;  
You find it in his wisest page,  
Whom God deludes is well deluded.  
1849. 1869.

Where are the great, whom thou  
would'st wish to praise thee?  
Where are the pure, whom thou would'st  
choose to love thee?  
Where are the brave, to stand supreme  
above thee,  
Whose high commands would cheer,  
whose chiding raise thee?  
Seek, seeker, in thyself; submit to  
find

In the stones, bread, and life in the  
blank mind. 1849. 1862.

When the enemy is near thee,  
Call on us!  
In our hands we will upbear thee,  
He shall neither scathe nor scare thee,  
He shall fly thee, and shall fear thee.  
Call on us!  
Call when all good friends have left thee,  
Of all good sights and sounds bereft thee;  
Call when hope and heart are sinking,  
And the brain is sick with thinking,  
Help, O help!  
Call, and following close behind thee  
There shall haste, and there shall find  
thee,  
Help, sure help.

When the panic comes upon thee,  
When necessity seems on thee,  
Hope and choice have all forgone thee,  
Fate and force are closing o'er thee,  
And but one way stands before thee—  
Call on us!  
Oh, and if thou dost not call,  
Be but faithful, that is all.  
Go right on, and close behind thee  
There shall follow still and find thee,  
Help, sure help.  
1849. 1862.

#### SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,  
The labor and the wounds are vain,  
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,  
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;  
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,  
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,  
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly break-  
ing,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets  
making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,  
When daylight comes, comes in the  
light, [slowly,  
In front, the sun climbs slow, how  
But westward, look, the land is bright.  
1849. 1862.

## EASTER DAY

NAPLES, 1849

THROUGH the great sinful streets of  
Naples as I passed,  
With fiercer heat than flamed above  
my head

My heart was hot within me; till at  
last

My brain was lightened when my  
tongue had said—

Christ is not risen!

Christ is not risen, no—

He lies and moulders low;

Christ is not risen!

What though the stone were rolled  
away, and though

The grave found empty there?—

If not there, then elsewhere;

If not where Joseph laid Him first, why  
then

Where other men

Translaid Him after, in some humbler  
clay.

Long ere to-day

Corruption that sad perfect work hath  
done,

Which here she scarcely, lightly had  
begun:

The foul engendered worm

Feeds on the flesh of the life-giving  
form

Of our most Holy and Anointed One.

He is not risen, no—

He lies and moulders low;

Christ is not risen!

What if the women, ere the dawn was  
gray,

Saw one or more great angels, as they  
say

(Angels, or Him himself)? Yet neither  
there, nor then,

Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at  
all,

Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten;  
Nor save in thunderous terror, to blind

Saul;

Save in an after Gospel and late Creed,

He is not risen, indeed,—

Christ is not risen!

Or, what if e'en, as runs a tale, the Ten  
Saw, heard, and touched, again and yet  
again?

What if at Emmaüs' inn, and by Caper-  
naum's Lake,

Came One, the bread that brake—

Came One that spake as never mortal  
spake,

And with them ate, and drank, and  
stood, and walked about?

Ah? "some" did well to "doubt!"

Ah! the true Christ, while these things  
came to pass,

Nor heard, nor spake, nor walked, nor  
lived, alas!

He was not risen, no—

He lay and mouldered low,

Christ was not risen!

As circulates in some great city crowd  
A rumor changeful, vague, impor-  
tunate, and loud,

From no determined centre or of fact

Or authorship exact,

Which no man can deny

Nor verify;

So spread the wondrous fame;

He all the same

Lay senseless, mouldering, low:

He was not risen, no—

Christ was not risen!

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;

As of the unjust, also of the just—

Yea, of that Just One, too!

This is the one sad Gospel that is true—

Christ is not risen!

Is He not risen, and shall we not rise?

Oh, we unwise!

What did we dream, what wake we to  
discover?

Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains,  
cover!

In darkness and great gloom

Come ere we thought it is *our* day of  
doom;

From the cursed world, which is one  
tomb,

Christ is not risen!

Eat, drink, and play, and think that this  
is bliss:

There is no heaven but this;

There is no hell,

Save earth, which serves the purpose  
doubly well.

Seeing it visits still

With equallest apportionment of ill

Both good and bad alike, and brings to  
one same dust

The unjust and the just

With Christ, who is not risen.

Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls be-  
reaved:

Of all the creatures under heaven's  
wide cope  
We are most hopeless, who had once  
most hope, [lieved.  
And most beliefless, that had most be-  
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;  
As of the unjust, also of the just—  
Yea, of that Just One too !  
It is the one sad Gospel that is true—  
Christ is not risen !

Weep not beside the tomb,  
Ye women, unto whom [Him ;  
He was great solace while ye tended  
Ye who with napkin o'er the head  
And folds of linen round each wounded  
limb  
Laid out the Sacred Dead ;  
And thou that bar'st Him in thy won-  
dering womb ;  
Yea, Daughters of Jerusalem, depart,  
Bind up as best ye may your own sad  
bleeding heart :

Go to your homes, your living children  
tend,  
Your earthly spouses love ;  
Set your affections *not* on things  
above,  
Which moth and rust corrupt, which  
quickliest come to end :  
Or pray, if pray ye must, and pray, if  
pray ye can,  
For death ; since dead is He whom ye  
deemed more than man,  
Who is not risen : no—  
But lies and moulders low—  
Who is not risen !

Ye men of Galilee !  
Why stand ye looking up to heaven,  
where Him ye ne'er may see,  
Neither ascending hence, nor returning  
hither again ?

Ye ignorant and idle fishermen !  
Hence to your huts, and boats, and in-  
land native shore,  
And catch not men, but fish ;  
Whate'er things ye might wish,  
Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall  
meet with more.

Ye poor deluded youths, go home,  
Mend the old nets ye left to roam,  
Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail :  
It was indeed an "idle tale"—  
He was not risen !  
And, oh, good men of ages yet to be,  
Who shall believe *because* ye did not  
see—

Oh, be ye warned, be wise !  
Nor more with pleading eyes,  
And sobs of strong desire,  
Unto the empty vacant void aspire,  
Seeking another and impossible birth  
That is not of your own, and only mother  
earth.

But if there is no other life for you,  
Sit down and be content, since this must  
even do ;

He is not risen !  
One look, and then depart,  
Ye humble and ye holy men of  
heart ;  
And ye ! ye ministers and stewards of a  
Word

Which ye would preach, because another  
heard—

Ye worshippers of that ye do not  
know,  
Take these things hence and go :—  
He is not risen !

Here, on our Easter Day  
We rise, we come, and lo ! we find Him  
not,

Gardener nor other, on the sacred spot :  
Where they have laid Him there is none  
to say ;

No sound, nor in, nor out—no word  
Of where to seek the dead or meet the  
living Lord.

There is no glistening of an angel's  
wings,

There is no voice of heavenly clear be-  
hest :

Let us go hence, and think upon these  
things

In silence, which is best.  
Is He not risen ? No—  
But lies and moulders low ?  
Christ is not risen ?

## EASTER DAY

### II

So in the sinful streets, abstracted and  
alone,

I with my secret self held communing  
of mine own.

So in the southern city spake the  
tongue

Of one that somewhat overwildly sung,  
But in a later hour I sat and heard

Another voice that spake—another  
graver word.

Weep not, it bade, whatever hath been  
said,

Though He be dead, He is not dead.

In the true creed  
He is yet risen indeed ;  
Christ is yet risen.

Weep not beside His Tomb,  
Ye women unto whom  
He was great comfort and yet greater  
grief ;  
Nor ye, ye faithful few that wont with  
Him to roam,  
Seek sadly what for Him ye left, go  
hopeless to your home ;  
Nor ye despair, ye sharers yet to be of  
their belief ;  
Though He be dead, He is not dead,  
Nor gone, though fled,  
Not lost, though vanished ;  
Though He return not, though  
He lies and moulders low ;  
In the true creed  
He is yet risen indeed ;  
Christ is yet risen.

Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,  
Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly  
look around.  
Whate'er befell,  
Earth is not hell ;  
Now, too, as when it first began,  
Life is yet life, and man is man.  
For all that breathe beneath the heaven's  
high cope,  
Joy with grief mixes, with despondence  
hope.  
Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief ;  
Or at least, faith unbelief.  
Though dead, not dead ;  
Not gone, though fled ;  
Not lost, though vanished.  
In the great gospel and true creed,  
He is yet risen indeed ;  
Christ is yet risen. 1849. 1869.

#### HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE!

HOPE evermore and believe, O man, for  
e'en as thy thought  
So are the things that thou see'st ;  
e'en as thy hope and belief.  
Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise  
to provoke thee against them ;  
Hast thou courage? enough, see them  
exulting to yield.  
Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the  
wild sea's fuming waters  
(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty  
thou think'st to destroy).  
All with ineffable longing are waiting  
their Invader,

All, with one varying voice, call to  
him, Come and subdue ;  
Still for their Conqueror call, and, but  
for the joy of being conquered  
(Rapture they will not forego), dare  
to resist and rebel ;  
Still, when resisting and raging, in soft  
undervoice say unto him,  
Fear not, retire not, O man ; hope  
evermore and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun  
and the stars direct thee,  
Go with the girdle of man, go and  
encompass the earth.  
Not for the gain of the gold ; for the  
getting, the hoarding, the having.  
But for the joy of the deed ; but for  
the Duty to do.  
Go with the spiritual life, the higher  
volition and action,  
With the great girdle of God, go and  
encompass the earth.

Go ; say not in thy heart, And what  
then were it accomplished,  
Were the wild impulse allayed, what  
were the use or the good !  
Go, when the instinct is stilled, and  
when the deed is accomplished,  
What thou hast done and shalt do,  
shall be declared to thee then.  
Go with the sun and the stars, and yet  
evermore in thy spirit  
Say to thyself : It is good : yet is there  
better than it.  
This that I see is not all, and this that I  
do is but little ;  
Nevertheless it is good, though there  
is better than it. 1862.

#### QUI LABORAT, ORAT

O ONLY Source of all our light and life.  
Whom as our truth, our strength, we  
see and feel,  
But whom the hours of mortal moral  
strife  
Alone aright reveal !

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly  
brought,  
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine :  
Chastised each rebel self-encentered  
thought,  
My will adareth Thine.

With eye down-dropped, if then this  
earthly mind

Speechless remain, or speechless e'en  
depart ;  
Nor seek to see—for what of earthly  
kind  
Can see Thee as Thou art?—

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold  
In thought's abstractest forms to seem  
to see.

It dare not dare the dread communion  
hold

In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed  
forgive,

In worldly walks the prayerless heart  
prepare ;

And if in work its life it seem to live,  
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the  
work it plies,

Unsummoned powers the blinding film  
shall part,

And scarce by happy tears made dim,  
the eyes

In recognition start.

But, as thou wilt, give or e'en forbear  
The beatific supersensual sight,

So, with Thy blessing blessed, that  
humbler prayer

Approach Thee morn and night.

1862.

*ὁμιλος ἄυμνος*

O THOU whose image in the shrine  
Of human spirits dwells divine ;  
Which from that precinct once con-  
veyed,

To be to outer day displayed,  
Doth vanish, part, and leave behind  
Mere blank and void of empty mind,  
Which wilful fancy seeks in vain  
With casual shapes to fill again !

O Thou that in our bosom's shrine  
Dost dwell, unknown because divine !  
I thought to speak, I thought to say,  
"The light is here," "behold the way."  
"The voice was thus," and "thus the  
word,"

And "thus I saw," and "that I heard."—  
But from the lips that half essayed  
The imperfect utterance fell unmade.

O Thou, in that mysterious shrine  
Enthroned, as I must say, divine !  
I will not frame one thought of what  
Thou mayest either be or not.

I will not prate of "thus" and "so,"  
And be profane with "yes" and "no,"  
Enough that in our soul and heart  
Thou, whatsoe'er Thou may'st be, art.

Unseen, secure in that high shrine  
Acknowledged present and divine,  
I will not ask some upper air,  
Some future day to place Thee there ;  
Nor say, nor yet deny, such men  
And women saw Thee thus and then :  
Thy name was such, and there or here  
To him or her Thou didst appear.

Do only Thou in that dim shrine,  
Unknown or known, remain, divine ;  
There, or if not, at least in eyes  
That scan the fact that round them lies,  
The hand to sway, the judgment guide,  
In sight and sense Thyself divide :  
Be Thou but there,—in soul and heart,  
I will not ask to feel Thou art. 1862.

#### "THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY"

WHAT we, when face to face we see  
The Father of our souls, shall be,  
John tells us, doth not yet appear ;  
Ah ! did he tell what we are here !

A mind for thoughts to pass into,  
A heart for loves to travel through,  
Five senses to detect things near,  
Is this the whole that we are here ?

Rules baffle instincts—instincts rules,  
Wise men are bad—and good are fools,  
Facts evil—wishes vain appear,  
We cannot go, why are we here ?

O may we for assurance' sake,  
Some arbitrary judgment take,  
And wilfully pronounce it clear,  
For this or that 'tis we are here ?

Or is it right, and will it do,  
To pace the sad confusion through,  
And say :—It doth not yet appear.  
What we shall be, what we are here ?

Ah yet, when all is thought and said,  
The heart still overrules the head ;  
Still what we hope we must believe,  
And what is given us receive ;

Must still believe, for still we hope  
That in a world of larger scope,  
What here is faithfully begun  
Will be completed, not undone.



My child, we still must think, when we  
That ampler life together see,  
Some true result will yet appear  
Of what we are, together, here. 1862.

#### AH! YET CONSIDER IT AGAIN!

"OLD things need not be therefore true,"  
O brother men, nor yet the new;  
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,  
And yet consider it again!

The souls of now two thousand years  
Have laid up here their toils and fears,  
And all the earnings of their pain,—  
Ah, yet consider it again!

We! what do we see? each a space  
Of some few yards before his face;  
Does that the whole wide plan explain?  
Ah, yet consider it again!

Alas! the great world goes its way,  
And takes its truth from each new day;  
They do not quit, nor can retain,  
Far less consider it again. 1851. 1862.

#### SONGS IN ABSENCE

COME home, come home! and where is  
home for me, [sea?  
Whose ship is driving o'er the trackless  
To the frail bark here plunging on its  
way,  
To the wild waters, shall I turn and say  
To the plunging bark, or to the salt sea  
foam,  
You are my home?

Fields once I walked in, faces once I  
knew,  
Familiar things so old my heart believed  
them true,  
These far, far back, behind me lie, be-  
fore  
The dark clouds mutter, and the deep  
seas roar,  
And speak to them that 'neath and o'er  
them roam  
No words of home.

Beyond the clouds, beyond the waves  
that roar,  
There may indeed, or may not be a shore,  
Where fields as green, and hands and  
hearts as true,  
The old forgotten semblance may renew,  
And offer exiles driven far o'er the salt  
sea foam  
Another home.

But toil and pain must wear out many a  
day,  
And days bear weeks, and weeks bear  
months away,  
Ere, if at all, the weary traveller hear,  
With accents whispered in his wayworn  
ear,  
A voice he dares to listen to, say, Come  
To thy true home.

Come home, come home! and where a  
home hath he [sea?  
Whose ship is driving o'er the driving  
Through clouds that mutter, and o'er  
waves that roar, [shore  
Say, shall we find, or shall we not, a  
That is, as is not ship or ocean foam,  
Indeed our home? 1852. 1862.

GREEN fields of England! wheresoe'er  
Across this watery waste we fare,  
Your image at our hearts we bear,  
Green fields of England, everywhere.

Sweet eyes in England, I must flee  
Past where the waves' last confines be,  
Ere your loved smile I cease to see,  
Sweet eyes in England, dear to me.

Dear home in England, safe and fast  
If but in thee my lot lie cast,  
The past shall seem a nothing past  
To thee, dear home, if won at last:  
Dear home in England, won at last.  
1852. 1862.

COME back, come back! behold with  
straining mast  
And swelling sail, behold her steaming  
fast;  
With one new sun to see her voyage o'er,  
With morning light to touch her native  
shore.  
Come back! come back.

Come back, come back! while westward  
laboring by,  
With sailless yards, a bare black hulk  
we fly.  
See how the gale we fight with sweeps  
her back,  
To our lost home, on our forsaken track.  
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back! across the fly-  
ing foam,  
We hear faint far-off voices call us home:

Come back, ye seem to say ; ye seek in vain ;

We went, we sought, and homeward turned again.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back ; and whither back or why ?

To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes to try ;

Walk the old fields ; pace the familiar street ;

Dream with the idlers, with the bards compete.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back ; and whither and for what ?

To finger idly some old Gordian knot, Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to cleave,

And with much toil attain to half-believe.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back ; yea back, indeed, do go

Sighs panting thick, and tears that want to flow ;

Fond fluttering hopes upraise their use-  
less wings,

And wishes idly struggle in the strings ;

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, more eager than the breeze,

The flying fancies sweep across the seas, And lighter far than ocean's flying foam,

The heart's fond message hurries to its home.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back !

Back flies the foam ; the hoisted flag streams back ;

The long smoke wavers on the home-ward track,

Back fly with winds things which the winds obey,

The strong ship follows its appointed way. 1852. 1862.

SOME future day when what is now is not, [got,

When all old faults and follies are for- And thoughts of difference passed like dreams away,

We'll meet again, upon some future day.

When all that hindered, all that vexed our love,

As tall rank weeds will climb the blade above,

When all but it has yielded to decay, We'll meet again upon some future day.

When we have proved, each on his course alone,

The wider world, and learned what's now unknown,

Have made life clear, and worked out each a way,

We'll meet again,—we shall have much to say.

With happier mood, and feelings born anew,

Our boyhood's bygone fancies we'll re-view, [play,

Talk o'er old talks, play as we used to And meet again, on many a future day.

Some day, which oft our hearts shall yearn to see, [be,

In some far year, though distant yet to Shall we indeed,—ye winds and waters, say !—

Meet yet again, upon some future day ? 1852. 1862.

WHERE lies the land to which the ship would go ?

Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know. And where the land she travels from ?

Away, Far, far behind, is all that they can say

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,

Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace ;

Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westerns rave,

How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave !

The dripping sailor on the reeling mast Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go ?

Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know. And where the land she travels from ?

Away, Far, far behind, is all that they can say

1852. 1862.

WERE you with me, or I with you,  
There's nought, methinks, I might not  
do;  
Could venture here, and venture there,  
And never fear, nor ever care.

To things before, and things behind,  
Could turn my thoughts, and turn my  
mind,  
On this and that, day after day,  
Could dare to throw myself away.

Secure, when all was o'er, to find  
My proper thought, my perfect mind,  
And unimpaired receive anew  
My own and better self in you.  
1853. 1862.

O SHIP, ship, ship,  
That travellest over the sea,  
What are the tidings, I pray thee,  
Thou bearest hither to me?

Are they tidings of comfort and joy,  
That shall make me seem to see  
The sweet lips softly moving  
And whispering love to me?

Or are they of trouble and grief,  
Estrangement, sorrow, and doubt,  
To turn into torture my hopes,  
And drive me from Paradise out?

O ship, ship, ship,  
That comest over the sea,  
Whatever it be thou bringest,  
Come quickly with it to me.  
1853. 1869.

#### THE STREAM OF LIFE

O STREAM descending to the sea,  
Thy mossy banks between,  
The flow'rets blow, the grasses grow,  
The leafy trees are green.

In garden plots the children play,  
The fields the laborers till,  
And houses stand on either hand,  
And thou descendest still.

O life descending into death,  
Our waking eyes behold,  
Parent and friend thy lapse attend,  
Companions young and old.

Strong purposes our mind possess,  
Our hearts affections fill,  
We toil and earn, we seek and learn,  
And thou descendest still.

O end to which our currents tend,  
Inevitable sea,  
To which we flow, what do we know,  
What shall we guess of thee?

A roar we hear upon thy shore,  
As we our course fulfil;  
Scarce we divine a sun will shine  
And be above us still. 1862.

#### "WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABLE NESS, NEITHER SHADOW OF TURNING"

It fortifies my soul to know  
That, though I perish, Truth is so:  
That, howsoever I stray and range,  
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.  
I steadier step when I recall  
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall. 1862.

#### ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS

THE skies have sunk, and hid the upper  
snow  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),

The rainy clouds are filing fast below,  
And wet will be the path, and wet shall  
we.

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

Ah dear, and where is he, a year ago,  
Who stepped beside and cheered us on  
and on?

My sweetheart wanders far away from  
me,  
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

The lightning zigzags shoot across the  
sky

(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),

And through the vale the rains go  
sweeping by;

Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel  
they

O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that  
stray

(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie).

And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to  
mind  
The pleasant huts and herds he left be-  
hind ?

And doth he sometimes in his slumbering  
see  
The feeding kine, and doth he think of  
me,  
My sweetheart wandering whereso'er it  
be ?

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to  
snow  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),  
And loud and louder roars the flood be-  
low.

Heigho ! but soon in shelter shall we be :  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),

Or shall he find before his term be sped,  
Some comelier maid that he shall wish  
to wed ?

(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.)

For weary is work, and weary day by day  
To have your comfort miles on miles  
away.

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,  
And he returning see himself too late ?  
For work we must, and what we see, we  
see,

And God he knows, and what must be,  
must be

When sweethearts wander far away  
from me.

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

The sky behind is brightening up anew  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),

The rain is ending, and our journey too :  
Heigho ! aha ! for here at home are we :—  
In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.  
1863.

#### CURRENTE CALAMO

QUICK, painter, quick, the moment seize  
Amid the snowy Pyrenees ;  
More evanescent than the snow,  
The pictures come, are seen, and go :  
Quick, quick, *currenthe calamo*.

I do not ask the tints that fill  
The gate of day 'twixt hill and hill ;  
I ask not for the hues that fleet  
Above the distant peaks ; my feet  
Are on a poplar-bordered road,  
Where with a saddle and a load  
A donkey, old and ashen-gray,  
Reluctant works his dusty way.  
Before him, still with might and main  
Pulling his rope, the rustic rein,  
A girl : before both him and me,  
Frequent she turns and lets me see,  
Unconscious, lets me scan and trace  
The sunny darkness of her face  
And outlines full of southern grace.

Following I notice, yet and yet,  
Her olive skin, dark eyes deep set,  
And black, and blacker e'en than jet,  
The escaping hair that scantily showed,  
Since o'er it in the country mode,  
For winter warmth and summer shade,  
The lap of scarlet cloth is laid.  
And then, back-falling from the head,  
A crimson kerchief overspread  
Her jacket blue : thence passing down,  
A skirt of darkest yellow-brown,  
Coarse stuff, allowing to the view  
The smooth limb to the woollen shoe.

But who—here's some one following  
too,—

A priest, and reading at his book !  
Read on, O priest, and do not look ;  
Consider,—she is but a child,—  
Yet might your fancy be beguiled.  
Read on, O priest, and pass and go !  
But see, succeeding in a row,  
Two, three, and four, a motley train,  
Musicians wandering back to Spain ;  
With fiddle and with tambourine,  
A man with women following seen.  
What dresses, ribbon ends, and flowers !  
And,—sight to wonder at for hours,—  
The man,—to Phillip has he sat ?—  
With butterfly-like velvet hat :  
One dame his big bassoon conveys,  
On one his gentle arm he lays ;  
They stop, and look, and something say,  
And to " España " ask the way.

But while I speak, and point them  
on,

Alas ! my dearer friends are gone ;  
The dark-eyed maiden and the ass  
Have had the time the bridge to pass.  
Vainly, beyond it far despoiled,  
Adieu, and peace with you abide,  
Gray donkey, and your beauteous guide.  
The pictures come, the pictures go,  
Quick, quick, *currenthe calamo*.

From *Mari Magno*, 1863.

## COME, POET, COME!

COME, Poet, come!

A thousand laborers ply their task,  
And what it tends to scarcely ask,  
And trembling thinkers on the brink  
Shiver, and know not how to think.  
To tell the purport of their pain,  
And what our silly joys contain;  
In lasting lineaments portray  
The substance of the shadowy day;  
Our real and inner deeds rehearse,  
And make our meaning clear in verse:  
Come, Poet, come! for but in vain  
We do the work or feel the pain,  
And gather up the seeming gain,  
Unless before the end thou come  
To take, ere they are lost, their sum.

Come, Poet, come!

To give an utterance to the dumb,  
And make vain babblers silent, come:  
A thousand dupes point here and there,  
Bewildered by the show and glare;  
And wise men half have learned to  
doubt

Whether we are not best without.  
Come, Poet; both but wait to see  
Their error proved to them in thee.

Come, Poet, come!

In vain I seem to call. And yet  
Think not the living times forgot.  
Ages of heroes fought and fell  
That Homer in the end might tell;  
O'er grovelling generations past  
Upstood the Doric fane at last;  
And countless hearts on countless years  
Had wasted thoughts, and hopes, and  
fears,

Rude laughter and unmeaning tears,  
Ere England Shakespeare saw, or Rome  
The pure perfection of her dome.  
Others, I doubt not, if not we,  
The issue of our toils shall see;  
Young children gather as their own  
The harvest that the dead had sown,  
The dead forgotten and unknown.

1862.

## THE HIDDEN LOVE

O LET me love my love unto myself alone,  
And know my knowledge to the world  
unknown;

No witness to my vision call,  
Beholding, unbeheld of all;  
And worship Thee, with Thee with-  
drawn apart,

Whoe'er, Whate'er Thou art,  
Within the closest veil of mine own in-  
most heart.

What is it then to me

If others are inquisitive to see?

Why should I quit my place to go and  
ask

If other men are working at their task!  
Leave my own buried roots to go  
And see that brother plants shall grow;  
And turn away from Thee, O Thou most  
Holy Light

To look if other orbs their orbits keep  
aright,

Around their proper sun,  
Deserting Thee, and being undone.

O let me love my love unto myself alone,  
And know my knowledge to the world  
unknown;

And worship Thee, O hid One, O much  
sought,

As but man can or ought,  
Within the abstracted'st shrine of my  
least breathed on thought.

Better it were, thou sayest, to consent:  
Feast while we may, and live ere life be  
spent;

Close up clear eyes, and call the un-  
stable sure,

The unlovely lovely, and the filthy pure;  
In self-belyings, self-deceivings roll.

And lose in Action, Passion, Talk, the  
soul.

Nay, better far to mark off thus much  
air,

And call it Heaven: place bliss and  
glory there; <sup>[sky]</sup>

Fix perfect homes in the unsubstantial  
And say, what is not, will be by-and-by.

1869.

PERCHE PENSA? PENSANDO S'IN-  
VECCHIA

To spend uncounted years of pain,

Again, again, and yet again.

In working out in heart and brain

The problem of our being here;

To gather facts from far and near,

Upon the mind to hold them clear.

And, knowing more may yet appear,

Unto one's latest breath to fear,

The premature result to draw—

Is this the object, end and law.

And purpose of our being here?

1869.

## LIFE IS STRUGGLE

ar out heart, and nerves, and  
rain,  
ve oneself a world of pain ;  
ar, angry, fierce, and hot,  
ous, supple—God knows what,  
at's all one to have or not ;  
unwise, absurd, and vain !  
not joy, it is not gain,  
t in itself a bliss,  
is precisely this  
at keeps us all alive.

we truly feel the pain,  
ite are sinking with the strain ;—  
y, simply, undeceived,  
, and say we ne'er believed  
ject, e'en were it achieved,  
; we e'er had cared to keep ;  
eart and soul to hold it cheap,  
en to go and try it again ;  
unwise, absurd, and vain !  
not joy, and 'tis not bliss,  
is precisely this  
at keeps us still alive. 1869.

ITS ON THE THOUGHT OF  
DEATH

thou whose casual hand with-  
raws  
t at first as casually did make.  
at amount of ages it will take  
ardy rare concurrences of laws,  
btle multiplicities of cause,  
ng they once had made us to re-  
nake ; [awake,  
pes dead slumbering dare to re-  
ter utmost interval of pause,  
evolutions must have passed, be-  
ore  
at celestial cycles shall restore  
rry sign whose present hour is  
one ;  
orse than dubious chances inter-  
ose, [pose  
loud and sunny gleam to recom-  
ey picture we had gazed upon.

as not by that the soul desired  
l in the judgment, wisest men  
ave thought  
rnishing the evidence it sought,  
eart hath ever fervently required,  
ry, for that reason deemed in-  
pired,  
;

To every clime, in every age, hath  
taught ;  
If in this human complex there be aught  
Not lost in death, as not in birth acquired,  
O then, though cold the lips that did  
convey  
Rich freights of meaning, dead each liv-  
ing sphere  
Where thought abode, and fancy loved  
to play,  
Thou yet, we think, somewhere somehow  
still art,  
And satisfied with that the patient heart  
The where and how doth not desire to  
hear. 1869.

## IN A LONDON SQUARE

PUT forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane.  
East wind and frost are safely gone ;  
With zephyr mild and balmy rain  
The summer comes serenely on ;  
Earth, air, and sun and skies combine  
To promise all that's kind and fair :—  
But thou, O human heart of mine,  
Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,  
The winds of March were wild and  
drear,  
And, nearing and receding still,  
Spring never would, we thought, be  
here.  
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine.  
Had, not the less, their certain date :—  
And thou, O human heart of mine,  
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.  
1869.

## ALL IS WELL

WHATE'ER you dream, with doubt  
possessed,  
Keep, keep it snug within your breast,  
And lay you down and take your rest ;  
Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,  
And when you wake, to work again.  
The wind it blows, the vessel goes,  
And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well : no need of care ;  
Though how it will, and when, and  
where,  
We cannot see, and can't declare.  
In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,  
'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,  
The wind it blows, the ship it goes,  
Though where and whither, no one  
knows. 1869.

# ARNOLD

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## ARNOLD

### QUIET WORK

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,  
 One lesson which in every wind is  
     blown,  
 One lesson of two duties kept at one  
 Though the loud world proclaim their  
     enmity—  
 Of toil unsever'd from tranquillity!  
 Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows  
 Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in  
     repose,  
 Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!  
 Yes, while on earth a thousand discords  
     ring,  
 Man's fitful uproar mingling with his  
     toil,  
 Still do thy sleepless ministers move on;  
 Their glorious tasks in silence perfect-  
     ing;  
 Still working, blaming still our vain  
     turmoil,  
 Laborers that shall not fail, when man  
     is gone. 1849.

### TO A FRIEND

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad  
 days, my mind?—  
 He much, the old man, who, clearest-  
     soul'd of men,  
 Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian  
     Fen,  
 And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay,  
 though blind.  
 Much he, whose friendship I not long  
     since won,  
 That halting slave, who in Nicopolis  
 Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal  
     son  
 Clear'd Rome of what most shamed him.  
     But be his  
 My special thanks, whose even-balanced  
     soul,  
 From first youth tested up to extreme  
     old age,

Business could not make dull, nor pas-  
     sion wild;

Who saw life steady, and saw it whole;  
 The mellow glory of the Attic stage,  
 Singer of sweet Colonna, and its child.  
     1848.

### SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art  
 free.  
 We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art  
     still,  
 Out-topping knowledge. For the left-  
     est hill,  
 Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,  
 Planting his steadfast footsteps in the  
     sea,  
 Making the heaven of heavens his dwell-  
     ing-place,  
 Spares but the cloudy border of his base  
 To the foil'd searching of mortality;  
 And thou, who didst the stars and sun-  
     beams know,  
 Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honor'd,  
     self-secure,  
 Didst tread on earth unguess'd at—  
     Better so!  
 All pains the immortal spirit must  
     endure,  
 All weakness which impairs, all grief  
     which bow,  
 Find their sole speech in that victorious  
     brow. 1849.

### THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;  
 Down and away below!  
 Now my brothers call from the bay,  
 Now the great winds shoreward blow,  
 Now the salt tides seaward flow;  
 Now the wild white horses play.  
 Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.  
 Children dear, let us away!  
 This way, this way!

Call her once before you go—  
 Call once yet!  
 In a voice that she will know:  
 "Margaret! Margaret!"  
 Children's voices should be dear  
 (Call once more) to a mother's ear;  
 Children's voices, wild with pain—  
 Surely she will come again!  
 Call her once and come away;  
 This way, this way!  
 "Mother dear, we cannot stay!  
 The wild white horses foam and fret."  
 Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;  
 Call no more!  
 One last look at the white-wall'd town,  
 And the little gray church on the windy  
 shore,  
 Then come down!  
 She will not come though you call all  
 day;  
 Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 We heard the sweet bells over the  
 bay?  
 In the caverns where we lay,  
 Through the surf and through the swell,  
 The far-off sound of a silver bell?  
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,  
 Where the winds are all asleep;  
 Where the spent lights quiver and  
 gleam,  
 Where the salt weed sways in the  
 stream,  
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,  
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-  
 ground;  
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,  
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine;  
 Where great whales come sailing by,  
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,  
 Round the world for ever and aye?  
 When did music come this way?  
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 (Call yet once) that she went away?  
 Once she sate with you and me,  
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the  
 sea,  
 And the youngest sate on her knee.  
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she  
 tended it well,  
 When down swung the sound of a far-off  
 bell.  
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the  
 clear green sea;

She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk  
 pray  
 In the little gray church on the shore to-  
 day.  
 'T will be Easter-time in the world—ah  
 me!  
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here  
 with thee."  
 I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the  
 waves;  
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the  
 kind sea-caves!"  
 She smiled, she went up through the  
 surf in the bay.  
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?  
 "The sea grows stormy, the little ones  
 moan;  
 Long prayers," I said, "in the world  
 they say;  
 Come!" I said; and we rose through the  
 surf in the bay.  
 We went up the beach, by the sandy  
 down  
 Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the  
 white-wall'd town;  
 Through the narrow paved streets, where  
 all was still,  
 To the little gray church on the windy  
 hill.  
 From the church came a murmur of  
 folk at their prayers,  
 But we stood without in the cold blow-  
 ing airs.  
 We climb'd on the graves, on the stones  
 worn with rains,  
 And we gazed up the aisle through the  
 small leaded panes.  
 She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:  
 "Margaret, hie! come quick, we are  
 here!  
 Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;  
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones  
 moan."  
 But, ah, she gave me never a look,  
 For her eyes were seal'd to the holy  
 book!  
 Loud prays the priest; shut stands the  
 door.  
 Come away, children, call no more!  
 Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!  
 Down to the depths of the sea!  
 She sits at her wheel in the humming  
 town,  
 Singing most joyfully.  
 Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,

For the humming street, and the child  
 with its toy ! [well ;  
 For the priest and the bell, and the holy  
 For the wheel where I spun,  
 And the blessed light of the sun !"  
 And so she sings her fill,  
 Singing most joyfully,  
 Till the spindle drops from her hand,  
 And the whizzing wheel stands still.  
 She steals to the window, and looks at  
 the sand,  
 And over the sand at the sea ;  
 And her eyes are set in a stare ;  
 And anon there breaks a sigh,  
 And anon there drops a tear,  
 From a sorrow-clouded eye,  
 And a heart sorrow-laden,  
 A long, long sigh ;  
 For the cold strange eyes of a little Mer-  
 maiden  
 And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children ;  
 Come children, come down !  
 The hoarse wind blows coldly ;  
 Lights shine in the town.  
 She will start from her slumber  
 When gusts shake the door ;  
 She will hear the winds howling,  
 Will hear the waves roar.  
 We shall see, while above us  
 The waves roar and whirl,  
 A ceiling of amber,  
 A pavement of pearl.  
 Singing : " Here came a mortal,  
 But faithless was she !  
 And alone dwell for ever  
 The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,  
 When soft the winds blow,  
 When clear falls the moonlight,  
 When spring tides are low ;  
 When sweet airs come seaward  
 From heaths starr'd with broom,  
 And high rocks throw mildly  
 On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;  
 Up the still, glistening beaches,  
 Up the creeks we will hie,  
 Over banks of bright seaweed  
 The ebb-tide leaves dry.  
 We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
 At the white, sleeping town ;  
 At the church on the hill-side—  
 And then come back down.  
 Singing : " There dwells a loved one,  
 But cruel is she !  
 She left lonely for ever  
 The kings of the sea."

1849.

## THE STRAYED REVELLER

THE PORTICO OF CIRCE'S PALACE  
EVENING*A Youth. Circe**The Youth*

FASTER, faster,  
 O Circe, Goddess,  
 Let the wild, thronging train,  
 The bright procession  
 Of eddying forms,  
 Sweep through my soul !

Thou standest, smiling  
 Down on me ! thy right arm,  
 Lean'd up against the column there,  
 Props thy soft cheek ;  
 Thy left holds, hanging loosely,  
 The deep cup, ivy-cinctured,  
 I held but now.

Is it, then, evening  
 So soon ? I see, the night-dews,  
 Cluster'd in thick beads, dim  
 The agate brooch-stones  
 On thy white shoulder ;  
 The cool night-wind, too,  
 Blows through the portico,  
 Stirs thy hair, Goddess,  
 Waves thy white robe !

*Circe*

Whence art thou, sleeper ?

*The Youth*

When the white dawn first  
 Through the rough fir-planks  
 Of my hut, by the chestnuts,  
 Up at the valley-head,  
 Came breaking, Goddess !  
 I sprang up, I threw round me  
 My dappled fawn-skin ;  
 Passing out, from the wet turf,  
 Where they lay, by the hut door,  
 I snatch'd up my vine-crown, my fir-staff  
 All drench'd in dew—  
 Came swift down to join  
 The rout early gather'd  
 In the town, round the temple,  
 Iacchus' white fane  
 On yonder hill.

Quick I pass'd, following  
 The wood-cutters' cart-track  
 Down the dark valley ;—I saw  
 On my left, through the beeches,

Thy palace, Goddess,  
Smokeless, empty !  
Trembling, I enter'd ; beheld  
The court all silent,  
The lions sleeping,  
On the altar this bowl.  
I drank, Goddess !  
And sank down here, sleeping,  
On the steps of thy portico.

*Circe*

Foolish boy ! Why tremblest thou ?  
Thou lovest it, then, my wine ?  
Wouldst more of it ? See, how glows,  
Through the delicate, flush'd marble,  
The red, creaming liquor,  
Strown with dark seeds !  
Drink, then ! I chide thee not,  
Deny thee not my bowl.  
Come, stretch forth thy hand, then—so !  
Drink—drink again !

*The Youth*

Thanks, gracious one !  
Ah, the sweet fumes again !  
More soft, ah me,  
More subtle-winding  
Than Pan's flute-music !  
Faint—faint ! Ah me,  
Again the sweet sleep !

*Circe*

Hist ! Thou—within there !  
Come forth, Ulysses !  
Art tired with hunting ?  
While we range the woodland,  
See what the day brings.

*Ulysses*

Ever new magic !  
Hast thou then lured hither,  
Wonderful Goddess, by thy art,  
The young, languid-eyed Ampelus,  
Iacchus' darling—  
Or some youth beloved of Pan,  
Of Pan and the Nymphs ?  
That he sits, bending downward  
His white, delicate neck  
To the ivy-wreathed marge  
Of thy cup : the bright, glancing vine-  
leaves  
That crown his hair,  
Falling forward, mingling  
With the dark ivy-plants—  
His fawn-skin, half untied,  
Smear'd with red wine-stains ? Who is  
he.  
That he sits, overweigh'd

By fumes of wine and sleep,  
So late, in thy portico ?  
What youth, Goddess,—what guest  
Of Gods or mortals ?

*Circe*

Hist ! he wakes !  
I lured him not hither, Ulysses.  
Nay, ask him !

*The Youth*

Who speaks ? Ah, who comes forth  
To thy side, Goddess, from within ?  
How shall I name him ?  
This spare, dark-featured,  
Quick-eyed stranger ?  
Ah, and I see too  
His sailor's bonnet,  
His short coat, travel-tarnish'd,  
With one arm bare !—  
Art thou not he, whom fame  
This long time rumors  
The favor'd guest of Circe, brought by  
the waves ?  
Art thou he, stranger ?  
The wise Ulysses,  
Laertes' son ?

*Ulysses*

I am Ulysses.  
And thou, too, sleeper ?  
Thy voice is sweet.  
It may be thou hast follow'd  
Through the islands some divine bard,  
By age taught many things,  
Age and the Muses ;  
And heard him delighting  
The chiefs and people  
In the banquet, and learn'd his songs,  
Of Gods and Heroes,  
Of war and arts,  
And peopled cities,  
Inland, or built  
By the gray sea.—If so, then hail !  
I honor and welcome thee.

*The Youth*

The Gods are happy.  
They turn on all sides  
Their shining eyes,  
And see below them  
The earth and men.

They see Tiresias  
Sitting, staff in hand,  
On the warm, grassy  
Asopus bank,  
His robe drawn over

His old, sightless head,  
Revolving inly  
The doom of Thebes.

They see the Centaurs  
In the upper glens  
Of Pelion, in the streams,  
Where red-berried ashes fringe  
The clear-brown shallow pools,  
With streaming flanks, and heads  
Rear'd proudly, snuffing  
The mountain wind.

They see the Indian  
Drifting, knife in hand,  
His frail boat moor'd to  
A floating isle thick-matted  
With large-leaved, low-creeping melon-  
plants,  
And the dark cucumber.  
He reaps, and stows them,  
Drifting—drifting ;—round him,  
Round his green harvest-plot,  
Flow the cool lake-waves,  
The mountains ring them.

They see the Scythian  
On the wide stepp, unharnessing  
His wheel'd house at noon.  
He tethers his beast down, and makes  
his meal—  
Mares' milk, and bread  
Baked on the embers ;—all around  
The boundless, waving grass-plains  
stretch, thick-starr'd  
With saffron and the yellow hollyhock  
And flag-leaved iris-flowers.  
Sitting in his cart [miles,  
He makes his meal ; before him, for long  
Alive with bright green lizards,  
And the springing bustard-fowl,  
The track, a straight black line,  
Furrows the rich soil ; here and there  
Clusters of lonely mounds  
Topp'd with rough-hewn,  
Gray, rain-blear'd statues, overpeer  
The sunny waste.

They see the ferry  
On the broad, clay-laden  
Lone Chorasman stream ; thereon,  
With snort and strain,  
Two horses, strongly swimming, tow  
The ferry-boat, with woven ropes  
To either bow  
Firm harness'd by the mane ; a chief  
With shout and shaken spear,  
Stands at the prow, and guides them ;  
but astern

The cowering merchants, in long robes,  
Sit pale beside their wealth  
Of silk-bales and of balsam-drops,  
Of gold and ivory,  
Of turquoise-earth and amethyst,  
Jasper and chalcedony,  
And milk-barr'd onyx-stones.  
The loaded boat swings groaning  
In the yellow eddies ;  
The Gods behold them.

They see the Heroes  
Sitting in the dark ship  
On the foamless, long-heaving  
Violet sea,  
At sunset nearing  
The Happy Islands.

These things, Ulysses,  
The wise bards also  
Behold and sing.  
But oh, what labor !  
O prince, what pain !

They too can see  
Tiresias ;—but the Gods,  
Who give them vision,  
Added this law :  
That they should bear too  
His groping blindness,  
His dark foreboding,  
His scorn'd white hairs ;  
Bear Hera's anger  
Through a life lengthen'd  
To seven ages.

They see the Centaurs  
On Pelion ;—then they feel,  
They too, the maddening wine  
Swell their large veins to bursting ; in  
wild pain  
They feel the biting spears  
Of the grim Lapithæ, and Theseus, drive.  
Drive crashing through their bones ;  
they feel  
High on a jutting rock in the red stream  
Alcmena's dreadful son  
Ply his bow ; such a price  
The Gods exact for song :  
To become what we sing.

They see the Indian  
On his mountain lake ; but squalls  
Make their skiff reel, and worms  
In the unkind spring have gnawn  
Their melon-harvest to the heart.—They  
see  
The Scythian ; but long frosts  
Parch them in winter-time on the bare  
stepp,

Till they too fade like grass ; they crawl  
Like shadows forth in spring.

They see the merchants  
On the Oxus stream ;—but care  
Must visit first them too, and make  
them pale.

Whether, through whirling sand,  
A cloud of desert robber-horse have  
burst

Upon their caravan ; or greedy kings,  
In the wall'd cities the way passes  
through,

Crush'd them with tolls ; or fever-airs,  
On some great river's marge,  
Mown them down, far from home.

They see the Heroes  
Near harbor :—but they share  
Their lives, and former violent toil in  
Thebes.

Seven-gated Thebes, or Troy ;  
Or where the echoing oars  
Of Argo first  
Startled the unknown sea.

The old Silenus  
Came, lolling in the sunshine,  
From the dewy forest-coverts,  
This way at noon.  
Sitting by me, while his Fauns  
Down at the water-side  
Sprinkled and smoothed  
His drooping garland,  
He told me these things.

But I, Ulysses,  
Sitting on the warm steps,  
Looking over the valley,  
All day long, have seen.  
Without pain, without labor,  
Sometimes a wild-hair'd Manad—  
Sometimes a Faun with torches—  
And sometimes, for a moment,  
Passing through the dark stems  
Flowing-robed, the beloved,  
The desire, the divine,  
Beloved Iacchus.

Ah, cool night-wind, tremulous stars !  
Ah, glimmering water,  
Fitful earth-murmur,  
Dreaming woods !  
Ah, golden-haired, strangely smiling  
Goddess,  
And thou, proved, much enduring,  
Wave-toss'd Wanderer !  
Who can stand still ?  
Ye fade, ye swim, ye waver before me—  
The cup again !

Faster, faster,  
O Circe, Goddess.  
Let the wild, thronging train,  
The bright procession  
Of eddying forms,  
Sweep through my soul ! 1849.

#### MEMORIAL VERSES

APRIL, 1850

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,  
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.  
But one such death remain'd to come ;  
The last poetic voice is dumb—  
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
We bow'd our head and held our breath.  
He taught us little ; but our soul  
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.  
With shivering heart the strife we saw  
Of passion with eternal law ;  
And yet with reverential awe  
We watch'd the fount of fiery life  
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we  
said :  
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.  
Physician of the iron age,  
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.  
He took the suffering human race,  
He read each wound, each weakness  
clear ;  
And struck his finger on the place.  
And said : *Thou ailest here, and here !*  
He look'd on Europe's dying hour  
Of fitful dream and feverish power ;  
His eye plunged down the weltering  
strife,  
The turmoil of expiring life—  
He said : *The end is everywhere.*  
*Art still has truth, take refuge there !*  
And he was happy, if to know  
Causes of things, and far below  
His feet to see the lurid flow  
Of terror, and insane distress,  
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth !—Ah, pale ghosts,  
rejoice !  
For never has such soothing voice  
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,  
Since erst, at morn, some wandering  
shade  
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come  
Through Hades, and the mournful  
gloom.

Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,  
 Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!  
 He too upon a wintry clime  
 Had fallen—on this iron time  
 Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.  
 He found us when the age had bound  
 Our souls in its benumbing round;  
 He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.  
 He laid us as we lay at birth  
 On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
 Smiles broke from us and we had ease;  
 The hills were round us, and the breeze  
 Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;  
 Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.  
 Our youth returned; for there was shed  
 On spirits that had long been dead,  
 Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,  
 The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light  
 Man's prudence and man's fiery might,  
 Time may restore us in his course  
 Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;  
 But where will Europe's latter hour  
 Again find Wordsworth's healing  
 power?

Others will teach us how to dare,  
 And against fear our breast to steel;  
 Others will strengthen us to bear—  
 But who, ah! who, will make us feel?  
 The cloud of mortal destiny,  
 Others will front it fearlessly—  
 But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave  
 O Rotha, with thy living wave!  
 Sing him thy best! for few or none  
 Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.  
 1850.

#### SELF-DECEPTION

SAY, what blinds us, that we claim the  
 glory  
 Of possessing powers not our share?  
 —Since man woke on earth, he knows  
 his story,  
 But, before we woke on earth, we were.

Long, long since, undower'd yet, our  
 spirit  
 Roam'd ere birth, the treasures of God:  
 Saw the gifts, the powers it might in-  
 herit.  
 Ask'd an outfit for its earthly road.

Then, as now, this tremulous, eager  
 being  
 Strain'd and long'd and grasp'd each gift  
 it saw;

Then, as now, a Power beyond our see-  
 ing,  
 Staved us back, and gave our choice the  
 law.

Ah, whose hand that day through  
 Heaven guided  
 Man's new spirit, since it was not we?  
 Ah, who swayed our choice and who de-  
 cided  
 What our gifts, and what our wants  
 should be?

For, alas! he left us each retaining  
 Shreds of gifts which he refused in full.  
 Still these waste us with their hopeless  
 straining,  
 Still the attempt to use them proves  
 them null.

And on earth we wander, groping, reel-  
 ing;  
 Powers stir in us, stir and disappear.  
 Ah! and he, who placed our master-  
 feeling,  
 Fail'd to place that master-feeling clear.

We but dream we have our wish'd-for  
 powers,  
 Ends we seek we never shall attain.  
 Ah! some power exists there, which is  
 ours?  
 Some end is there, we indeed may gain!  
 1852.

#### THE SECOND BEST

MODERATE tasks and moderate leisure,  
 Quiet living, strict-kept measure  
 Both in suffering and in pleasure—  
 'Tis for this thy nature yearns.

But so many books thou readest.  
 But so many schemes thou breedest,  
 But so many wishes feedest.  
 That thy poor head almost turns.

And (the world 's so madly jangled,  
 Human things so fast entangled)  
 Nature's wish must now be strangled  
 For that best which she discerns.

So it *must* be! yet, while leading  
 A strain'd life, while overfeeding.  
 Like the rest, his wit with reading.  
 No small profit that man earns.

Who through all he meets can steer him.  
 Can reject what cannot clear him.  
 Cling to what can truly cheer him:  
 Who each day more surely learns

That an impulse, from the distance  
Of his deepest, best existence,  
To the words, "Hope, Light, Persist-  
ence,"  
Strongly sets and truly burns.

1852.

## LYRIC STANZAS OF EMPEDOCLES

THE out-spread world to span  
A cord the Gods first slung,  
And then the soul of man  
There, like a mirror, hung,  
And bade the winds through space im-  
pel the gusty toy.

Hither and thither spins  
The wind-borne, mirroring soul,  
A thousand glimpses wins,  
And never sees a whole;  
Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and  
leaves its last employ.

The Gods laugh in their sleeve  
To watch man doubt and fear  
Who knows not what to believe  
Since he sees nothing clear,  
And dares stamp nothing false where  
he finds nothing sure.

Is this, Pausanias, so?  
And can our souls not strive,  
But with the winds must go,  
And hurry where they drive?  
Is fate indeed so strong, man's strength  
indeed so poor?

I will not judge. That man,  
Howbeit, I judge as lost,  
Whose mind allows a plan,  
Which would degrade it most;  
And he treats doubt the best who tries  
to see least ill.

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!  
Thou art my friend; to thee,  
All knowledge that I have,  
All skill I wield, are free.  
Ask not the latest news of the last mir-  
acle,

Ask not what days and nights  
In trance Pantheia lay,  
But ask how thou such sights  
May'st see without dismay;  
Ask what most helps when known, thou  
son of Anchitus!

What? hate, and awe, and shame  
Fill thee to see our time;

Thou feelest thy soul's frame  
Shaken and out of chime?  
What? life and chance go hard with thee  
too, as with us;

Thy citizens, 'tis said,  
Envy thee and oppress,  
Thy goodness no men aid,  
All strive to make it less;  
Tyranny, pride, and lust, fill Sicily's  
abodes;

Heaven is with earth at strife,  
Signs make thy soul afraid,  
The dead return to life,  
Rivers are dried, winds stay'd;  
Scarce can one think in calm, so threat-  
ening are the Gods;

And we feel, day and night,  
The burden of ourselves—  
Well, then, the wiser wight  
In his own bosom delves,  
And asks what ails him so, and gets  
what cure he can.

The sophist sneers: Fool, take  
Thy pleasure, right or wrong.  
The pious wail: Forsake  
A world these sophists throng.  
Be neither saint nor sophist-led, but be a  
man!

These hundred doctors try  
To preach thee to their school.  
We have the truth! they cry;  
And yet their oracle,  
Trumpet it as they will, is but the same  
as thine.

Once read thy own breast right,  
And thou hast done with fears;  
Man gets no other light,  
Search he a thousand years.  
Sink in thyself! there ask what ails thee,  
at that shrine!

What makes thee struggle and rave?  
Why are men ill at ease?—  
'Tis that the lot they have  
Fails their own will to please;  
For man would make no murmuring,  
were his will obey'd.

And why is it, that still  
Man with his lot thus fights?—  
'Tis that he makes this will  
The measure of his rights,  
And believes Nature outraged if his will's  
gainsaid.



Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn  
How deep a fault is this ;  
Couldst thou but once discern  
Thou hast no *right* to bliss,  
No title from the Gods to welfare and  
repose ;

Then thou wouldst look less mazed  
Whene'er of bliss debarr'd,  
Nor think the Gods were crazed  
When thy own lot went hard.  
But we are all the same—the fools of our  
own woes !

For, from the first faint morn  
Of life, the thirst for bliss  
Deep in man's heart is born ;  
And, sceptic as he is,  
He fails not to judge clear if this be  
quench'd or no.

Nor is the thirst to blame.  
Man errs not that he deems  
His welfare his true aim,  
He errs because he dreams  
The world does but exist that welfare to  
bestow.

We mortals are no kings  
For each of whom to sway  
A new-made world up-springs,  
Meant merely for his play ;  
No, we are strangers here ; the world is  
from of old.

In vain our pent wills fret,  
And would the world subdue.  
Limits we did not set  
Condition all we do ;  
Born into life we are, and life must be  
our mould.

Born into life !—man grows  
Forth from his parents' stem,  
And blends their bloods, as those  
Of theirs are blent in them ;  
So each new man strikes root into a far  
fore-time.

Born into life !—we bring  
A bias with us here,  
And, when here, each new thing  
Affects us we come near ;  
To tunes we did not call our being must  
keep chime.

Born into life !—in vain,  
Opinions, those or these,  
Unalter'd to retain

The obstinate mind decrees ;  
Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effaci-  
in.

Born into life !—who lists  
May what is false hold dear,  
And for himself make mists  
Through which to see less clear ;  
The world is what it is, for all our d-  
and din.

Born into life !—'tis we,  
And not the world, are new ;  
Our cry for bliss, our plea,  
Others have urged it too—  
Our wants have all been felt, our err-  
made before.

No eye could be too sound  
To observe a world so vast,  
No patience too profound  
To sort what's here amass'd ;  
How man may here best live no ca-  
too great to explore.

But we—as some rude guest  
Would change, where'er he roam,  
The manners there profess'd  
To those he brings from home—  
We mark not the world's course, b-  
would have it take *ours*.

The world's course proves the terr-  
On which man wins content ;  
Reason the proof confirms—  
We spurn it, and invent  
A false course for the world, and f-  
ourselves, false powers.

Riches we wish to get,  
Yet remain spendthrifts still ;  
We would have health, and yet  
Still use our bodies ill ;  
Bafflers of our own prayers, from you  
to life's last scenes.

We would have inward peace,  
Yet will not look within ;  
We would have misery cease,  
Yet will not cease from sin ;  
We want all pleasant ends, but will t-  
no harsh means ;

We do not what we ought,  
What we ought not, we do,  
And lean upon the thought  
That chance will bring us through  
But our own acts, for good or ill, t-  
mightier powers.

Yet, even when man forsakes  
All sin,—is just, is pure,  
Abandons all which makes  
His welfare insecure,—  
Other existences there are, that clash  
with ours.

Like us, the lightning-fires  
Love to have scope and play;  
The stream, like us, desires  
An unimpeded way;  
Like us, the Libyan wind delights to  
roam at large.

Streams will not curb their pride  
The just man not to entomb,  
Nor lightnings go aside  
To give his virtues room;  
For is that wind less rough which blows  
a good man's barge.

Nature, with equal mind,  
Sees all her sons at play;  
Sees man control the wind,  
The wind sweep man away;  
Blows the proudly-riding and the  
foundering bark.

And, lastly, though of ours  
No weakness spoil our lot,  
Though the non-human powers  
Of Nature harm us not,  
he ill deeds of other men make often  
our life dark.

What were the wise man's plan?—  
Through this sharp, toil-set life,  
To work as best he can,  
And win what's won by strife.—  
But we an easier way to cheat our pains  
have found.

Scratch'd by a fall, with moans  
As children of weak age  
Lend life to the dumb stones  
Whereon to vent their rage,  
and bend their little fists, and rate the  
senseless ground;

So, loath to suffer mute,  
We, peopling the void air,  
Make Gods to whom to impute  
The ills we ought to bear;  
With God and Fate to rail at, suffering  
easily.

Yet grant—as sense long miss'd  
Things that are now perceived,  
And much may still exist

Which is not yet believed—  
Grant that the world were full of Gods  
we cannot see;

All things the world which fill  
Of but one stuff are spun,  
That we who rail are still,  
With what we rail at, one;  
One with the o'erlabored Power that  
through the breadth and length

Of earth, and air, and sea,  
In men, and plants, and stones,  
Hath toil perpetually,  
And travails, pants, and moans;  
Fain would do all things well, but some-  
times fails in strength.

And patiently exact  
This universal God  
Alike to any act  
Proceeds at any nod.  
And quietly declaims the cursings of  
himself.

This is not what man hates,  
Yet he can curse but this,  
Harsh Gods and hostile Fates  
Are dreams! this only is  
Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the  
foolish elf.

Not only, in the intent  
To attach blame elsewhere,  
Do we at will invent  
Stern Powers who make their care  
To embitter human life, malignant  
Deities;

But, next, we would reverse  
The scheme ourselves have spun,  
And what we made to curse  
We now would lean upon,  
And feign kind Gods who perfect what  
man vainly tries.

Look, the world tempts our eye,  
And we would know it all!  
We map the starry sky,  
We mine this earthen ball,  
We measure the sea-tides, we number  
the sea-sands;

We scrutinise the dates  
Of long-past human things,  
The bounds of effaced states,  
The lines of deceased kings;  
We search out dead men's words, and  
works of dead men's hands;

We shut our eyes, and muse  
How our own minds are made,  
What springs of thought they use,  
How righten'd, how betray'd—  
And spend our wit to name what most  
employ unnamed.

But still, as we proceed  
The mass swells more and more  
Of volumes yet to read,  
Of secrets yet to explore.  
Our hair grows gray, our eyes are  
dimm'd, our heat is tamed;

We rest our faculties,  
And thus address the Gods:  
"True science if there is,  
It stays in your abodes!  
Man's measures cannot mete the im-  
measurable All.

"You only can take in  
The world's immense design.  
Our desperate search was sin,  
Which henceforth we resign,  
Sure only that your mind sees all things  
which befall."

Fools! That in man's brief term  
He cannot all things view,  
Affords no ground to affirm  
That there are Gods who do;  
Nor does being weary prove that he has  
where to rest.

Again.—Our youthful blood  
Claims rapture as its right;  
The world, a rolling flood  
Of newness and delight,  
Draws in the enamor'd gazer to its  
shining breast;

Pleasure, to our hot grasp,  
Gives flowers after flowers;  
With passionate warmth we clasp  
Hand after hand in ours;  
Now do we soon perceive how fast our  
youth is spent.

At once our eyes grow clear!  
We see, in blank dismay,  
Year posting after year,  
Sense after sense decay;  
Our shivering heart is mined by secret  
discontent;

Yet still, in spite of truth,  
In spite of hopes entomb'd,  
That longing of our youth

Burns ever unconsumed,  
Still hungrier for delight as delight  
grow more rare.

We pause; we hush our heart,  
And thus address the Gods:  
"The world hath fail'd to impart  
The joy our youth forebodes,  
Fail'd to fill up the void which in  
breasts we bear.

"Changeful till now, we still  
Look'd on to something new;  
Let us, with changeless will,  
Henceforth look on to you,  
To find with you the joy we in vain have  
require!"

Fools! That so often here  
Happiness mock'd our prayer,  
I think, might make us fear  
A like event elsewhere;  
Make us, not fly to dreams, but moderate  
desire.

And yet, for those who know  
Themselves, who wisely take  
Their way through life, and bow  
To what they cannot break,  
Why should I say that life need yield  
but moderate bliss?

Shall we, with temper spoil'd,  
Health sapp'd by living ill,  
And judgment all embroil'd  
By sadness and self-will,  
Shall we judge what for man is not true  
bliss or is?

Is it so small a thing  
To have enjoy'd the sun,  
To have lived light in the spring,  
To have loved, to have thought,  
have done;  
To have advanced true friends, and be  
down baffling foes—

That we must feign a bliss  
Of doubtful future date,  
And, while we dream on this,  
Lose all our present state,  
And relegate to worlds yet distant  
repose?

Not much, I know, you prize  
What pleasures may be had,  
Who look on life with eyes  
Estranged, like mine, and sad;  
And yet the village-churl feels the truth  
more than you.

Who's loath to leave this life  
Which to him little yields—  
His hard-task'd sunburnt wife,  
His often-labor'd fields,  
The boors with whom he talk'd, the  
country-spots he knew.

But thou, because thou hear'st  
Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,  
Because the Gods thou fear'st  
Fail to make blest thy state,  
Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust  
the joys there are !

I say : Fear not ! Life still  
Leaves human effort scope.  
But, since life teems with ill,  
Nurse no extravagant hope ;  
Because thou must not dream, thou  
need'st not then despair ! 1852.

#### CALLICLES' SONG

FROM EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-  
bursts,  
Thick breaks the red flame ;  
All Etna heaves fiercely  
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo !  
Are haunts meet for thee.  
But, where Helicon breaks down  
In cliff to the sea, .

Where the moon-silver'd inlets  
Send far their light voice  
Up the still vale of Thisbe,  
O speed, and rejoice !

On the sward at the cliff-top  
Lie strewn the white flocks,  
On the cliff-side the pigeons  
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,  
Soft lull'd by the rills,  
Lie wrapped in their blankets  
Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming  
So white through the gloom ?  
What garments out-glistening  
The gold-flower'd broom ?

What sweet-breathing presence  
Out-perfumes the thyme ?  
What voices enrapture  
The night's balmy prime ?—

'Tis Apollo comes leading  
His choir, the Nine.  
—The leader is fairest,  
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows !  
They stream up again !  
What seeks on this mountain  
The glorified train ?—

They bathe on this mountain,  
In the spring by their road ;  
Then on to Olympus,  
Their endless abode.

—Whose praise do they mention ?  
Of what is it told ?—  
What will be for ever ;  
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father  
Of all things ; and then,  
The rest of immortals,  
The action of men ;

The day in his hotness,  
The strife with the palm ;  
The night in her silence,  
The stars in their calm. 1852.

#### THE YOUTH OF NATURE

RAISED are the dripping oars,  
Silent the boat ! the lake,  
Lovely and soft as a dream,  
Swims in the sheen of the moon.  
The mountains stand at its head  
Clear in the pure June-night,  
But the valleys are flooded with haze.  
Rydal and Fairfield are there ;  
In the shadow Wordsworth lies dead.  
So it is, so it will be for aye.  
Nature is fresh as of old,  
Is lovely ; a mortal is dead.

The spots which recall him survive,  
For he lent a new life to these hills.  
The Pillar still broods o'er the fields  
Which border Ennerdale Lake,  
And Egremont sleeps by the sea.  
The gleam of The Evening Star  
Twinkles on Grasmere no more,  
But ruin'd and solemn and gray  
The sheepfold of Michael survives ;  
And, far to the south, the heath  
Still blows in the Quantock coombs  
By the favorite waters of Ruth.  
These survive !—yet not without pain,  
Pain and dejection to-night.  
Can I feel that their poet is gone.

He grew old in an age he condemn'd.  
 He look'd on the rushing decay  
 Of the times which had shelter'd his  
     youth,  
 Felt the dissolving throes  
 Of a social order he loved ;  
 Outlived his brethren, his peers ;  
 And, like the Theban seer,  
 Died in his enemies' day.

Cold bubbled the spring of Tilphusa,  
 Copais lay bright in the moon,  
 Helicon glass'd in the lake  
 Its firs, and afar rose the peaks  
 Of Parnassus, snowily clear ;  
 Thebes was behind him in flames,  
 And the clang of arms in his ear,  
 When his awe-struck captors led  
 The Theban seer to the spring.  
 Tiresias drank and died.  
 Nor did reviving Thebes  
 See such a prophet again.

Well may we mourn, when the head  
 Of a sacred poet lies low  
 In an age which can rear them no more !  
 The complaining millions of men  
 Darken in labor and pain ;  
 But he was a priest to us all  
 Of the wonder and bloom of the world,  
 Which we saw with his eyes, and were  
     glad.  
 He is dead, and the fruit-bearing day  
 Of his race is past on the earth ;  
 And darkness returns to our eyes.

For, oh ! is it you, is it you,  
 Moonlight, and shadow, and lake,  
 And mountains, that fill us with joy,  
 Or the poet who sings you so well ?  
 Is it you, O beauty, O grace,  
 O charm, O romance, that we feel,  
 Or the voice which reveals what you are ?  
 Are ye, like daylight and sun,  
 Shared and rejoiced in by all ?  
 Or are ye immersed in the mass  
 Of matter, and hard to extract.  
 Or sunk at the core of the world  
 Too deep for the most to discern ?  
 Like stars in the deep of the sky,  
 Which arise on the glass of the sage,  
 But are lost when their watcher is gone.

"They are here"—I heard, as men heard  
 In Mysian Ida the voice  
 Of the Mighty Mother, or Crete,  
 The murmur of Nature reply—  
 "Loveliness, magic, and grace,  
 They are here ! they are set in the world,  
 They abide ; and the finest of souls

Hath not been thrill'd by them all,  
 Nor the dullest been dead to them quite.  
 The poet who sings them may die,  
 But they are immortal and live,  
 For they are the life of the world.  
 Will ye not learn it, and know,  
 When ye mourn that a poet is dead,  
 That the singer was less than his theme,  
 Life, and emotion, and I ?

"More than the singer are these.  
 Weak is the tremor of pain  
 That thrills in his mournfullest chord  
 To that which once ran through his soul.  
 Cold the elation of joy  
 In his gladdest, airiest song,  
 To that which of old in his youth  
 Fill'd him and made him divine.  
 Hardly his voice at its best  
 Gives us a sense of the awe,  
 The vastness, the grandeur, the gloom  
 Of the unlit gulf of himself.

"Ye know not yourselves ; and your  
     bards—  
 The clearest, the best, who have read  
 Most in themselves—have beheld  
 Less than they left unreveal'd.  
 Ye express not yourselves ;—can you  
     make"  
 With marble, with color, with word,  
 What charm'd you in others re-live ?  
 Can thy pencil, O artist ! restore  
 The figure, the bloom of thy love,  
 As she was in her morning of spring ?  
 Canst thou paint the ineffable smile  
 Of her eyes as they rested on thine ?  
 Can the image of life have the glow,  
 The motion of life itself ?

"Yourselves and your fellows ye know  
     not ; and me,  
 The mateless, the one, will ye know ?  
 Will ye scan me, and read me, and tell  
 Of the thoughts that ferment in my  
     breast,  
 My longing, my sadness, my joy ?  
 Will ye claim for your great ones the  
     gift  
 To have render'd the gleam of my skies.  
 To have echoed the moan of my seas.  
 Utter'd the voice of my hills ?  
 When your great ones depart, will ye  
     say :  
*All things have suffer'd a loss,  
 Nature is hid in their grave ?*

"Race after race, man after man,  
 Have thought that my secret was theirs.  
 Have dream'd that I lived but for them,

That they were my glory and joy.  
—They are dust, they are changed, they  
are gone!  
I remain." 1852.

## SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking  
What I am, and what I ought to be,  
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears  
me  
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire  
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:  
"Ye who from my childhood up have  
calm'd me,  
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye  
waters,  
On my heart your mighty charm renew;  
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,  
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault  
of heaven,

Over the lit sea's unquiet way,  
In the rustling night-air came the an-  
swer: [they.

"Wouldst thou be as these are? *Live as*

"Unaffrighted by the silence round  
them,  
Undistracted by the sights they see,  
These demand not that the things with-  
out them  
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their  
shining,  
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;  
For self-poised they live, nor pine with  
noting  
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregard-  
ful

In what state God's other works may be,  
In their own tasks all their powers  
pouring,  
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely  
clear,

A cry like thine in mine own heart I  
hear: [he,

"Resolve to be thyself; and know that  
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"  
1852.

## MORALITY

We cannot kindle when we will  
The fire which in the heart resides;  
The spirit bloweth and is still,  
In mystery our soul abides.  
But tasks in hours of insight will'd  
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet  
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;  
We bear the burden and the heat  
Of the long day, and wish 't were done.  
Not till the hours of light return,  
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,  
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,  
Ask, how *she* view'd thy self-control,  
Thy struggling, task'd morality—  
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,  
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,  
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,  
See, on her face a glow is spread,  
A strong emotion on her cheek!

"Ah, child!" she cries, "that strife  
divine,

Whence was it, for it is not mine?

"There is no effort on *my* brow—  
I do not strive, I do not weep;  
I rush with the swift spheres and glow  
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.  
Yet that severe, that earnest air,  
I saw, I felt it once—but where?

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,  
Nor wore the manacles of space;  
I felt it in some other clime,  
I saw it in some other place.  
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,  
And lay upon the breast of God."

1852.

## A SUMMER NIGHT

In the deserted, moon-blanch'd street,  
How lonely rings the echo of my feet!  
Those windows, which I gaze at, frown,  
Silent and white, unopening down,  
Repellant as the world;—but see,  
A break between the housetops shows  
The moon! and, lost behind her, fading  
dim  
Into the dewy dark obscurity  
Down at the far horizon's rim.  
Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose!

And to my mind the thought  
Is on a sudden brought  
Of a past night, and a far different scene.  
Hadlands stood out into the moonlit  
deep

As clearly as at noon ;  
The spring-tide's brimming flow  
Heaved dazzlingly between ;

Houses, with long white sweep,  
Girdled the glistening bay ;  
Behind, through the soft air,  
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread  
away,

The night was far more fair—  
But the same restless paces to and fro,  
And the same vainly throbbing heart  
was there,  
And the same bright, calm moon.

And the calm moonlight seems to say :  
*Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast,  
Which neither deadens into rest,  
Nor ever feels the fiery glow  
That whirls the spirit from itself away,  
But fluctuates to and fro,  
Never by passion quite possess'd  
And never quite benumb'd by the world's  
sway ?—*

And I, I know not if to pray  
Still to be what I am, or yield and be  
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,  
Where, in the sun's hot eye,  
With heads bent o'er their toil, they  
languidly  
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork  
give,  
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison  
wall.

And as, year after year,  
Fresh products of their barren labor fall  
From their tired hands, and rest  
Never yet comes more near,  
Gloom settles slowly down over their  
breast ;

And while they try to stem  
The waves of mournful thought by  
which they are pressed,  
Death in their prison reaches them,  
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still un-  
blest.

And the rest, a few,  
Escape their prison and depart  
On the wide ocean of life anew.  
There the freed prisoner, where'er his  
heart

Listeth, will sail ;  
Nor doth he know how there prevail,  
Despotic on that sea,  
Trade-winds which cross it from eternity.  
Awhile he holds some false way, unde-  
barr'd

By thwarting signs, and braves  
The freshening wind and blackening  
waves

And then the tempest strikes him ; and  
between

The lightning-bursts is seen  
Only a driving wreck,  
And the pale master on his spar-strewed  
deck

With anguish'd face and flying hair  
Grasping the rudder hard,  
Still bent to make some port he knows  
not where,

Still standing for some false, impossible  
shore.

And sterner comes the roar  
Of sea and wind, and through the deep-  
ening gloom

Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman's  
loom,

And he too disappears, and comes no  
more.

Is there no life, but these alone ?  
Madman or slave, must man be one ?

Plainness and clearness without shadow  
of stain !

Clearness divine !

Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions  
have no sign

Of languor, though so calm, and, though  
so great,

Are yet untroubled and unpassionate ;  
Who, though so noble, share in the  
world's toil,

And, though so task'd, keep free from  
dust and soil !

I will not say that your mild deeps retain  
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain  
Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd  
in vain—

But I will rather say that you remain  
A world above man's head, to let him  
see

How boundless might his soul's horizon  
be,

How vast, yet of what clear trans-  
parency !

How it were good to abide there, and  
breathe free ;

How fair a lot to fill  
Is left to each man still !



## THE BURIED LIFE

LIGHT flows our war of mocking words,  
and yet,  
Behold, with tears mine eyes are wet!  
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll,  
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,  
We know, we know that we can smile!  
But there's a something in this breast,  
To which thy light words bring no rest.  
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.  
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,  
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,  
And let me read there, love! thy inmost  
soul.

Alas! is even love too weak  
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?  
Are even lovers powerless to reveal  
To one another what indeed they feel?  
I knew the mass of men conceal'd  
Their thoughts, for fear that if reveal'd  
They would by other men be met  
With blank indifference, or with blame  
reproved;  
I knew they lived and moved  
Trick'd in disguises, alien to the rest  
Of men, and alien to themselves—and  
yet  
The same heart beats in every human  
breast!

But we, my love!—doth a like spell be-  
numb  
Our hearts, our voices?—must we too be  
dumb?

Ah! well for us, if even we,  
Even for a moment, can get free  
Our heart, and have our lips unchain'd;  
For that which seals them hath been  
deep-ordain'd!

Fate, which foresaw  
How frivolous a baby man would be—  
By what distractions he would be pos-  
sess'd,  
How he would pour himself in every  
strife,  
And well-nigh change his own identity—  
That it might keep from his capricious  
play  
His genuine self, and force him to obey  
Even in his own despite his being's law,  
Bade through the deep recesses of our  
breast

The unregarded river of our life  
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way;  
And that we should not see  
The buried stream, and seem to be

Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,  
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded  
streets,  
But often, in the din of strife,  
There rises an unspeakable desire  
After the knowledge of our buried life;  
A thirst to spend our fire and restless  
force

In tracking out our true, original  
course;

A longing to inquire  
Into the mystery of this heart which  
beats

So wild, so deep in us—to know  
Whence our lives come and where they  
go.

And many a man in his own breast then  
delves,

But deep enough, alas! none ever mines.  
And we have been on many thousand  
lines,

And we have shown, on each, spirit and  
power;

But hardly have we, for one little hour,  
Been on our own line, have we been  
ourselves—

Hardly had skill to utter one of all  
The nameless feelings that course  
through our breast,

But they course on for ever unexpress'd.  
And long we try in vain to speak and act  
Our hidden self, and what we say and do  
Is eloquent, is well—but 'tis not true!

And then we will no more be rack'd  
With inward striving, and demand  
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour  
Their stupefying power;

Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call!  
Yet still, from time to time, vague and  
forlorn,

From the soul's subterranean depth up-  
borne

As from an infinitely distant land,  
Come airs, and floating echoes, and con-  
vey

A melancholy into all our day.

Only—but this is rare—

When a beloved hand is laid in ours,  
When, jaded with the rush and glare  
Of the interminable hours,

Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,  
When our world-deafen'd ear

Is by the tones of a loved voice caress'd—  
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our  
breast,

And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.



The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies  
plain,  
And what we mean, we say, and what  
we would, we know.  
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,  
And hears its winding murmur; and he  
sees  
The meadows where it glides, the sun,  
the breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race  
Wherein he doth for ever chase  
That flying and elusive shadow, rest.  
An air of coolness plays upon his face,  
And an unwonted calm pervades his  
breast.  
And then he thinks he knows  
The hills where his life rose,  
And the sea where it goes. 1852.

### LINES

#### WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

In this lone, open glade I lie,  
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;  
And at its end, to stay the eye.  
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine-  
trees stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his,  
Across the girdling city's hum.  
How green under the boughs it is!  
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries  
come!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade  
To take his nurse his broken toy;  
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead  
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,  
What endless, active life is here!  
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!  
An air-stirr'd forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod  
Where the tired angler lies, stretch'd  
out,  
And, eased of basket and of rod,  
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,  
Be others happy if they can!  
But in my helpless cradle I  
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurl'd,  
Think often, as I hear them rave,  
That peace has left the upper world  
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!  
When I who watch them am away,  
Still all things in this glade go through  
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!  
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,  
The night comes down upon the grass,  
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine  
To feel, amid the city's jar,  
That there abides a peace of thine.  
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,  
The power to feel with others give!  
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die  
Before I have begun to live. 1852

### THE FUTURE

A WANDERER is man from his birth.  
He was born in a ship  
On the breast of the river of Time;  
Brimming with wonder and joy  
He spreads out his arms to the light,  
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the  
stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts  
been.

Whether he wakes  
Where the snowy mountainous pass,  
Echoing the screams of the eagles,  
Hems in its gorges the bed  
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream:  
Whether he first sees light  
Where the river in gleaming rings  
Sluggishly winds through the plain:  
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea—  
As is the world on the banks,  
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,  
Fable and dream  
Of the lands which the river of Time  
Had left ere he woke on its breast.  
Or shall reach when his eyes have been  
closed.

Only the tract where he sails  
He wots of; only the thoughts,  
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more  
As she was by the sources of Time?  
Who imagines her fields as they lay  
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?  
Who thinks as they thought, [breast.  
The tribes who then roam'd on her  
Her vigorous, primitive sons?

s in her bosom as clear  
 ah read, when she sate  
 the palm-shaded well?  
 ds in her breast  
 is pellucid a spring  
 , as tranquil, as sure?

ard,  
 ight of his vision, can deem  
 f the world, of the soul,  
 inness as near,  
 g as Moses felt  
 lay in the night by his flock  
 rlit Arabian waste?  
 nd obey  
 of the Spirit like him?

which the river of Time  
 s through with us, is the plain.  
 e calm of its earlier shore.  
 y cities and hoarse  
 ousand cries is its stream.  
 n its breast, our minds  
 sed as the cries which we hear,  
 and shot as the sights which  
 see.

ty that repose has fled  
 he course of the river of Time.  
 s will crowd to its edge  
 er, incessanter line;  
 lin will be more on its banks,  
 e trade on its stream,  
 e plain where it flows,  
 e sun overhead.  
 r will those on its breast  
 nobling sight,  
 he feeling of quiet again.

was before us we know not,  
 now not what shall succeed.

a river of Time—  
 rs, as the towns on its marge  
 r wavering lights  
 r, statelier stream—  
 ire, if not the calm  
 y mountainous shore,  
 mn peace of its own.

ridth of the waters, the hush  
 y expanse where he floats,  
 g its current and spotted with  
 n  
 rs to the Ocean, may strike  
 the soul of the man on its  
 rst—  
 le waste widens around him,  
 nks fade dimmer away,

As the stars come out, and the night-  
 wind  
 Brings up the stream  
 Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.  
 1852.

#### STANZAS IN MEMORY OF THE AUTHOR OF "OBERMANN"<sup>1</sup>

In front the awful Alpine track  
 Crawls up its rocky stair;  
 The autumn storm-winds drive the rack,  
 Close o'er it, in the air.

<sup>1</sup> The author of *Obermann*, Étienne Pivert de Senancour, has little celebrity in France, his own country; and out of France he is almost unknown. But the profound inwardness, the austere sincerity, of his principal work, *Obermann*, the delicate feeling for nature which it exhibits, and the melancholy eloquence of many passages of it, have attracted and charmed some of the most remarkable spirits of this century, such as George Sand and Sainte-Beuve, and will probably always find a certain number of spirits whom they touch and interest.

Senancour was born in 1770. He was educated for the priesthood, and passed some time in the seminary of St. Sulpice; broke away from the Seminary and from France itself, and passed some years in Switzerland, where he married; returned to France in middle life, and followed thenceforward the career of a man of letters, but with hardly any fame or success. He died an old man in 1846, desiring that on his grave might be placed these words only: *Eternité, deviens mon asile!*

The influence of Rousseau, and certain affinities with more famous and fortunate authors of his own day.—Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël,—are everywhere visible in Senancour. But though, like these eminent personages, he may be called a sentimental writer, and though *Obermann*, a collection of letters from Switzerland treating almost entirely of nature and of the human soul, may be called a work of sentiment, Senancour has a gravity and severity which distinguish him from all other writers of the sentimental school. The world is with him in his solitude far less than it is with them; of all writers he is the most perfectly isolated and the least attitudinizing. His chief work, too, has a value and power of its own, apart from these merits of its author. The stir of all the main forces, by which modern life is and has been impelled, lives in the letters of *Obermann*; the dissolving agencies of the eighteenth century, the fiery storm of the French Revolution, the first faint promise and dawn of that new world which our own time is but more fully bringing to light,—all these are to be felt, almost to be touched, there. To me, indeed, it will always seem that the impressiveness of this production can hardly be rated too high.

Beside *Obermann* there is one other of Senancour's works which, for those spirits who feel his attraction, is very interesting; its title is, *Libres Méditations d'un Solitaire Inconnu*. (Arnold's note. The passage of George Sand alluded to may be found in her *Questions d'Art et de Littérature*. Sainte-Beuve has several times written of Senancour; especially in his *Portraits Contemporains*, Vol. I, and in *Chateaubriand et son Groupe littéraire*, Chap. 14.)

Behind are the abandon'd baths<sup>1</sup>  
Mute in their meadows lone;  
The leaves are on the valley-paths,  
The mists are on the Rhone—

The white mists rolling like a sea!  
I hear the torrents roar.  
—Yes, Obermann, all speaks of thee;  
I feel thee near once more!

I turn thy leaves! I feel their breath  
Once more upon me roll;  
That air of languor, cold, and death,  
Which brooded o'er thy soul.

Fly hence, poor wretch, whoe'er thou art,  
Condemn'd to cast about,  
All shipwreck in thy own weak heart,  
For comfort from without!

A fever in these pages burns  
Beneath the calm they feign;  
A wounded human spirit turns,  
Here, on its bed of pain.

Yes, though the virgin mountain-air  
Fresh through these pages blows;  
Though to these leaves the glaciers spare  
The soul of their white snows;

Though here a mountain-murmur swells  
Of many a dark-bough'd pine;  
Though, as you read, you hear the bells  
Of the high-pasturing kine—

Yet, through the hum of torrent lone,  
And brooding mountain-bee,  
There sobs I know not what ground-tone  
Of human agony.

Is it for this, because the sound  
Is fraught too deep with pain,  
That, Obermann! the world around  
So little loves thy strain?

Some secrets may the poet tell,  
For the world loves new ways;  
To tell too deep ones is not well—  
It knows not what he says.

Yet, of the spirits who have reign'd  
In this our troubled day,  
I know but two, who have attain'd  
Save thee, to see their way.

<sup>1</sup> The Baths of Leuk. This poem was conceived, and partly composed, in the valley going down from the foot of the Gemmi Pass towards the Rhone. (Arnold.)

By England's lakes, in gray old age,  
His quiet home one keeps;  
And one, the strong much-tolling age,  
In German Weimar sleeps.

But Wordsworth's eyes avert their look  
From half of human fate;  
And Goethe's course few sons of men  
May think to emulate.

For he pursued a lonely road,  
His eyes on Nature's plan;  
Neither made man too much a God,  
Nor God too much a man.

Strong was he, with a spirit free  
From mists, and sane, and clear;  
Clearer, how much! than ours—yet we  
Have a worse course to steer.

For though his manhood bore the blast  
Of a tremendous time,  
Yet in a tranquil world was pass'd  
His tenderer youthful prime.

But we, brought forth and rear'd in hours  
Of change, alarm, surprise—  
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?  
What leisure to grow wise?

Like children bathing on the shore,  
Buried a wave beneath,  
The second wave succeeds, before  
We have had time to breathe.

Too fast we live, too much are tried,  
Too harass'd, to attain  
Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's  
wide  
And luminous view to gain.

And then we turn, thou sadder sage,  
To thee! we feel thy spell!  
—The hopeless tangle of our age,  
Thou too hast scan'd it well!

Immoveable thou sittest, still  
As death, composed to bear!  
Thy head is clear, thy feeling chill,  
And icy thy despair.

Yes, as the son of Thetis said,  
I hear thee saying now:  
*Greater by far than thou art dead;  
Strive not! die also thou!*

Ah! two desires toss about  
The poet's feverish blood.  
One drives him to the world without,  
And one to solitude.

*The glow, he cries, the thrill of life,  
Where, where do these abound?—  
Not in the world, not in the strife  
Of men, shall they be found.*

He who hath watch'd, not shared, the  
    strife,  
Knows how the day hath gone.  
He only lives with the world's life,  
Who hath renounced his own.

To thee we come, then! Clouds are roll'd  
Where thou, O seer! art set;  
Thy realm of thought is drear and cold—  
The world is colder yet!

And thou hast pleasures, too, to share  
With those who come to thee—  
Balms floating on thy mountain-air,  
And healing sights to see.

How often, where the slopes are green  
On Jaman, hast thou sate  
By some high chalet-door, and seen  
The summer-day grow late;

And darkness steal o'er the wet grass  
With the pale crocus starr'd,  
And reach that glimmering sheet of  
    glass  
Beneath the piny sward,

Lake Leman's waters, far below!  
And watch'd the rosy light  
Fade from the distant peaks of snow;  
And on the air of night

Heard accents of the eternal tongue  
Through the pine branches play—  
Listen'd, and felt thyself grow young!  
Listen'd and wept—Away!

Away the dreams that but deceive  
And thou, sad guide, adieu!  
I go, fate drives me; but I leave  
Half of my life with you.

We, in some unknown Power's employ,  
Move on a rigorous line;  
Can neither, when we will, enjoy,  
Nor, when we will, resign.

I in the world must live; but thou,  
Thou melancholy shade!  
Wilt not, if thou canst see me now,  
Condemn me, nor upbraid.

For thou art gone away from earth,  
And place with those dost claim,  
The Children of the Second Birth,  
Whom the world could not tame;

And with that small, transfigured band,  
Whom many a different way  
Conducted to their common land,  
Thou learn'st to think as they.

Christian and pagan, king and slave,  
Soldier and anchorite,  
Distinctions we esteem so grave,  
Are nothing in their sight.

They do not ask, who pined unseen,  
Who was on action hurl'd.  
Whose one bond is, that all have been  
Unspotted by the world.

There without anger thou wilt see  
Him who obeys thy spell  
No more, so he but rest, like thee,  
Unsoil'd!—and so, farewell.

Farewell!—Whether thou now liest near  
That much-loved inland sea,  
The ripples of whose blue waves cheer  
Vevey and Meillerie:

And in that gracious region bland,  
Where with clear-rustling wave  
The scented pines of Switzerland  
Stand dark round thy green grave,

Between the dusty vineyard-walls  
Issuing on that green place  
The early peasant still recalls  
The pensive stranger's face,

And stoops to clear thy moss-grown date  
Ere he plods on again;—  
Or whether, by maligner fate,  
Among the swarms of men,

Where between granite terraces  
The blue Seine rolls her wave,  
The Capital of Pleasure sees  
The hardly-heard-of grave;—

Farewell! Under the sky we part,  
In the stern Alpine dell.  
O unstrung will! O broken heart!  
A last, a last farewell! 1852.

#### REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,  
And never a spray of yew!  
In quiet she reposes;  
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;  
She bathed it in smiles of glee.  
But her heart was tired, tired,  
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,  
In mazes of heat and sound.  
But for peace her soul was yearning,  
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,  
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.  
To-night it doth inherit  
The vasty hall of death. 1853.

#### SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AND the first gray of morning fill'd the  
east,  
And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream.  
But all the Tartar camp along the stream  
Was hush'd, and still the men were  
plunged in sleep;  
Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long  
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;  
But when the gray dawn stole into his  
tent,  
He rose, and clad himself, and girt his  
sword,  
And took his horseman's cloak, and left  
his tent;  
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,  
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's  
tent.  
Through the black Tartar tents he  
pass'd, which stood  
Clustering like beehives on the low flat  
strand  
Of Oxus, where, the summer-floods o'er-  
flow  
When the sun melts the snows in high  
Pamere;  
Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er  
that low strand,  
And to a hillock came, a little back  
From the stream's brink—the spot where  
first a boat,  
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes  
the land.  
The men of former times had crown'd  
the top  
With a clay fort; but that was fall'n,  
and now  
The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,  
A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were  
spread.  
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and  
stood  
Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent,  
And found the old man sleeping on his  
bed  
Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his  
arms, [step  
And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the

Was dull'd; for he slept light, an old  
man's sleep;  
And he rose quickly on one arm, and  
said:—

“Who art thou? for it is not yet clear  
dawn.

Speak! is there news, or any night  
alarm?”

But Sohrab came to the bedside, and  
said:—

“Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.  
The sun is not yet risen, and the foe  
Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long  
I lie

Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.  
For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek  
Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son.  
In Samarcand, before the army march'd;  
And I will tell thee what my heart  
desires.

Thou know'st if, since from Ader-baijan  
first

I came among the Tartars and bore arms,  
I have still served Afrasiab well, and  
shown,

At my boy's years, the courage of a man.  
This too thou know'st, that while I still  
bear on

The conquering Tartar ensigns through  
the world,

And beat the Persians back on every  
field,

I seek one man, one man, and one alone—  
Rustum, my father; who I hoped should  
greet,

Should one day greet, upon some well-  
fought field,

His not unworthy, not inglorious son.  
So I long hoped, but him I never find.  
Come then, hear now, and grant me  
what I ask.

Let the two armies rest to-day; but I  
Will challenge forth the bravest Per-  
sian lords

To meet me, man to man; if I prevail,  
Rustum will surely hear it; if I fall—  
Old man, the dead need no one, claim no  
kin.

Dim is the rumor of a common fight.  
Where host meets host, and many names  
are sunk;

But of a single combat fame speaks  
clear.”

He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the  
hand

Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and  
said:—

“O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is  
thine!

Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,  
 And share the battle's common chance  
 with us  
 Who love thee, but must press for ever  
 first,  
 In single fight incurring single risk,  
 To find a father thou hast never seen?  
 That were far best, my son, to stay with  
 us  
 Unmurmuring; in our tents, while it is  
 war,  
 And when 't is truce, then in Afrasiab's  
 towns.  
 But, if this one desire indeed rules all,  
 To seek out Rustum—seek him not  
 through fight!  
 Seek him in peace, and carry to his  
 arms,  
 O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!  
 But far hence seek him, for he is not  
 here.  
 For now it is not as when I was young.  
 When Rustum was in front of every  
 fray;  
 But now he keeps apart, and sits at  
 home.  
 In Seistan, with Zal, his father old.  
 Whether that his own mighty strength  
 at last  
 Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age,  
 Or in some quarrel with the Persian  
 King.  
 There go!—Thou wilt not? Yet my  
 heart forebodes  
 Danger or death awaits thee on this  
 field.  
 Fain would I know thee safe and well,  
 though lost  
 To us; fain therefore send thee hence,  
 in peace  
 To seek thy father, not seek single  
 fights  
 In vain;—but who can keep the lion's  
 cub  
 From ravening, and who govern Rus-  
 tum's son?  
 Go, I will grant thee what thy heart  
 desires."  
 So said he, and dropp'd Sohrab's hand,  
 and left  
 His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he  
 lay;  
 And o'er his chilly limbs his woollen  
 coat  
 He pass'd, and tied his sandals on his  
 feet,  
 And threw a white cloak round him, and  
 he took

In his right hand a ruler's staff, no  
 sword;  
 And on his head he set his sheep-skin  
 cap,  
 Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-  
 Kul;  
 And raised the curtain of his tent, and  
 call'd  
 His herald to his side, and went abroad.  
 The sun by this had risen, and clear'd  
 the fog  
 From the broad Oxus and the glittering  
 sands.  
 And from their tents the Tartar horse-  
 men filed  
 Into the open plain; so Haman bade—  
 Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled  
 The host, and still was in his lusty  
 prime.  
 From their black tents, long files of  
 horse, they stream'd;  
 As when some gray November morn the  
 fies,  
 In marching orderspread, of long-neck'd  
 cranes  
 Stream over Casbin and the southern  
 slopes  
 Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,  
 Or some froze Caspian reed-bed, south-  
 ward bound  
 For the warm Persian sea-board—so they  
 stream'd.  
 The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's  
 guard,  
 First, with black sheep-skin caps and  
 with long spears;  
 Large men, large steeds; who from Bok-  
 hara come  
 And Khiva, and ferment the milk of  
 mares.  
 Next, the more temperate Toorkmuns of  
 the south,  
 The Tukas, and the lances of Salore.  
 And those from Attruck and the Cas-  
 pian sands;  
 Light men and on light steeds, who only  
 drink  
 The acrid milk of camels, and their  
 wells.  
 And then a swarm of wandering horse,  
 who came  
 From far, and a more doubtful service  
 own'd;  
 The Tartars of Ferghana, from the  
 banks  
 Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards  
 And close-set skull-caps; and those  
 wilder hordes [ern waste,  
 Who roam o'er Kipchak and the north-

Kalmucks and unkempt Kuzzaks, tribes  
 who stray  
 Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kir-  
 ghizzes,  
 Who come on shaggy ponies from Pa-  
 mere;  
 These all filed out from camp into the  
 plain.  
 And on the other side the Persians  
 form'd ;—  
 First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they  
 seem'd,  
 The Ilyats of Khorassan ; and behind,  
 The royal troops of Persia, horse and  
 foot,  
 Marshall'd battalions bright in burnish'd  
 steel.  
 But Peran-Wisa with his herald came,  
 Threading the Tartar squadrons to the  
 front,  
 And with his staff kept back the fore-  
 most ranks.  
 And when Ferood, who led the Persians,  
 saw  
 That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,  
 He took his spear, and to the front he  
 came,  
 And check'd his ranks, and fix'd them  
 where they stood.  
 And the old Tartar came upon the sand  
 Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and  
 said :  
 " Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars,  
 hear !  
 Let there be truce between the hosts to-  
 day.  
 But choose a champion from the Persian  
 lords  
 To fight our champion Sohrab, man to  
 man."  
 As, in the country, on a morn in June,  
 When the dew glistens on the pearled  
 ears,  
 A shiver runs through the deep corn for  
 joy—  
 So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa  
 said,  
 A thrill through all the Tartar squad-  
 rons ran  
 Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom  
 they loved.  
 But as a troop of pedlars, from Ca-  
 bool,  
 Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,  
 That vast sky neighboring mountain of  
 milk snow ;  
 Crossing so high, that, as they mount,  
 they pass [the snow,  
 Long flocks of travelling birds dead on

Choked by the air, and scarce can they  
 themselves  
 Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd  
 mulberries—  
 In single file they move, and stop their  
 breath,  
 For fear they should dislodge the o'er-  
 hanging snows—  
 So the pale Persians held their breath  
 with fear.  
 And to Ferood his brother chiefs came  
 up  
 To counsel : Gudurz and Zoarrah came,  
 And Feraburz, who ruled the Persian  
 host  
 Second, and was the uncle of the King ;  
 These came and counsell'd, and then  
 Gudurz said :—  
 " Ferood, shame bids us take their  
 challenge up,  
 Yet champion have we none to match  
 this youth.  
 He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's  
 heart ;  
 But Rustum came last night ; aloof he  
 sits  
 And sullen, and has pitch'd his tents  
 apart.  
 Him will I seek, and carry to his ear  
 The Tartar challenge, and this young  
 man's name.  
 Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight  
 Stand forth the while, and take their  
 challenge up."  
 So spake he ; and Ferood stood forth  
 and cried :—  
 " Old man, be it agreed as thou hast  
 said !  
 Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a  
 man."  
 He spake : and Peran-Wisa turn'd,  
 and strode  
 Back through the opening squadrons to  
 his tent.  
 But through the anxious Persians Gud-  
 urz ran,  
 And cross'd the camp which lay behind,  
 and reach'd,  
 Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's  
 tents.  
 Of scarlet cloth they were, and glitter-  
 ing gay,  
 Just pitch'd ; the high pavilion in the  
 midst  
 Was Rustum's, and his men lay camp'd  
 around.  
 And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and  
 found [but still  
 Rustum ; his morning meal was done,

The table stood before him, charged  
with food—  
A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of  
bread,  
And dark green melons ; and there Rustum sate  
Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,  
And play'd with it ; but Gudurz came  
and stood  
Before him ; and he look'd, and saw him  
stand,  
And with a cry sprang up and dropp'd  
the bird,  
And greeted Gudurz with both hands,  
and said :—  
“ Welcome ! these eyes could see no  
better sight.  
What news ? but sit down first, and eat  
and drink.”  
But Gudurz stood in the tent door,  
and said :—  
“ Not now ! a time will come to eat and  
drink,  
But not to-day ; to-day has other needs.  
The armies are drawn out, and stand at  
gaze ;  
For from the Tartars is a challenge  
brought  
To pick a champion from the Persian  
lords  
To fight their champion—and thou  
know'st his name—  
Sohrab men call him, but his birth is  
hid.  
O Rustum, like thy might is this young  
man's !  
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's  
heart ;  
And he is young, and Iran's chiefs are  
old,  
Or else too weak ; and all eyes turn to  
thee.  
Come down and help us, Rustum, or we  
lose ! ”  
He spoke ; but Rustum answer'd with  
a smile :—  
Go to ! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I  
Am older ; if the young are weak, the  
King  
Errs strangely ; for the King, for Kai  
Khosroo,  
Himself is young, and honors younger  
men,  
And lets the aged moulder to their  
graves.  
Rustum he loves no more, but loves the  
young—  
The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts,  
not I.

For what care I, though all speak  
Sohrab's fame ?  
For would that I myself had such a son,  
And not that one slight helpless girl I  
have—  
A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,  
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,  
My father, whom the robber Afghans  
vex,  
And clip his borders short, and drive  
his herds,  
And he has none to guard his weak old  
age.  
There would I go, and hang my armor  
up,  
And with my great name fence that  
weak old man,  
And spend the goodly treasures I have  
got,  
And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's  
fame,  
And leave to death the hosts of thank-  
less kings,  
And with these slaughterous hands draw  
sword no more.”  
He spoke and smiled ; and Gudurz  
made reply :—  
“ What then, O Rustum, will men  
say to this,  
When Sohrab dares our bravest forth,  
and seeks  
Thee most of all, and thou, whom most  
he seeks,  
Hidest thy face ? Take heed lest men  
should say :—  
*Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his  
fame,  
And shuns to peril it with younger men.*”  
And greatly moved, then Rustum  
made reply :—  
“ O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say  
such words ?  
Thou knowest better words than this to  
say.  
What is one more, one less, obscure or  
famed,  
Valiant or craven, young or old, to me ?  
Are not they mortal, am not I myself ?  
But who for men of nought would do  
great deeds ?  
Come, thou shalt see how Rustum  
hoards his fame !  
But I will fight unknown, and in plain  
arms ;  
Let not men say of Rustum, he was  
match'd  
In single fight with any mortal man.”  
He spoke, and frown'd ; and Gudurz  
turn'd, and ran



Back quickly through the camp in fear  
and joy—  
Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum  
came.  
But Rustum strode to his tent-door, and  
call'd  
His followers in, and bade them bring  
his arms,  
And clad himself in steel; the arms he  
chose  
Were plain, and on his shield was no  
device,  
Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,  
And, from the fluted spine atop, a plume  
Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair  
plume.  
So arm'd, he issued forth; and Ruksh,  
his horse,  
Follow'd him like a faithful hound at  
heel—  
Ruksh, whose renown was noised  
through all the earth,  
The horse, whom Rustum on a foray  
once  
Did in Bokhara by the river find  
A colt beneath its dam, and drove him  
home,  
And rear'd him; a bright bay, with  
lofty crest,  
Dight with a saddle-cloth of broider'd  
green  
Crusted with gold, and on the ground  
were work'd  
All beasts of chase, all beasts which  
hunters know.  
So follow'd, Rustum left his tents, and  
cross'd  
The camp, and to the Persian host ap-  
pear'd.  
And all the Persians knew him, and  
with shouts  
Hail'd: but the Tartars knew not who  
he was.  
And dear as the wet diver to the eyes  
Of his pale wife who waits and weeps  
on shore,  
By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,  
Plunging all day in the blue waves, at  
night,  
Having made up his tale of precious  
pearls,  
Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands—  
So dear to the pale Persians Rustum  
came.  
And Rustum to the Persian front ad-  
vanced,  
And Sohrab arm'd in Haman's tent, and  
came.  
And as afield the reapers cut a swath

Down through the middle of a rich  
man's corn,  
And on each side are squares of stand-  
ing corn,  
And in the midst a stubble, short and  
bare—  
So on each side were squares of men,  
with spears  
Bristling, and in the midst, the open  
sand.  
And Rustum came upon the sand, and  
cast  
His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and  
saw  
Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he  
came.  
As some rich woman, on a winter's  
morn,  
Eyes through her silken curtains the  
poor drudge  
Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes  
her fire—  
At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn.  
When the frost flowers the whiten'd  
window-panes—  
And wonders how she lives, and what  
the thoughts  
Of that poor drudge may be; so Rus-  
tum eyed  
The unknown adventurous youth, who  
from afar  
Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth  
All the most valiant chiefs; long he  
perused  
His spirited air, and wonder'd who he  
was.  
For very young he seem'd, tenderly  
rear'd;  
Like some young cypress, tall, and dark,  
and straight,  
Which in a queen's secluded garden  
throws  
Its slight dark shadow on the moonlit  
turf,  
By midnight, to a bubbling fountain's  
sound—  
So slender Sohrab seem'd, so softly  
rear'd.  
And a deep pity enter'd Rustum's soul  
As he beheld him coming; and he stood,  
And beckon'd to him with his hand, and  
said:—  
“O thou young man, the air of Heaven  
is soft,  
And warm, and pleasant; but the grave  
is cold!  
Heaven's air is better than the cold dead  
grave.  
Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,

And tried ; and I have stood on many a field  
Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe—  
Never was that field lost, or that foe saved.

O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death ?

Be govern'd ! quit the Tartar host, and come

To Iran, and be as my son to me,  
And fight beneath my banner till I die !  
There are no youths in Iran brave as thou."

So he spake, mildly ; Sohrab heard his voice,

The mighty voice of Rustum, and he saw  
His giant figure planted on the sand,  
Sole, like some single tower, which a chief

Hath builded on the waste in former years

Against the robbers ; and he saw that head,

Streak'd with its first gray hairs ;—hope filled his soul,

And he ran forward and embraced his knees,

And clasp'd his hand within his own, and said :—

" O, by thy father's head ! by thine own soul !

Art thou not Rustum ? speak ! art thou not he ? "

But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth.

And turn'd away, and spake to his own soul :—

" Ah me. I muse what this young fox may mean !

False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.

For if I now confess this thing he asks,  
And hide it not, but say : *Rustum is here !*

He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,

But he will find some pretext not to fight,  
And praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts

A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.

And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,  
In Samarcand, he will arise and cry :

' I challenged once, when the two armies camp'd

Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords  
To cope with me in single fight ; but they

Shrank, only Rustum dared ; then he and I

Changed gifts, and went on equal terms

So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud ;

Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed through me."

And then he turn'd, and sternly spake aloud :—

" Rise ! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus

Of Rustum ? I am here, whom thou hast call'd

By challenge forth ; make good thy vaunt, or yield !

Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst fight ?

Rash boy, men look on Rustum's face and flee !

For well I know, that did great Rustum stand

Before thy face this day, and were reveal'd,

There would be then no talk of fighting more.

But being what I am, I tell thee this—  
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul :

Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt and yield,

Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds

Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer-floods,

Oxus in summer wash them all away."

He spoke ; and Sohrab answer'd, on his feet :—

" Art thou so fierce ? Thou wilt not fright me so !

I am no girl, to be made pale by words.  
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand

Here on this field, there were no fighting then.

But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here.

Begin ! thou art more vast, more dread than I,

And thou art proved, I know, and I am young—

But yet success aways with the breath of Heaven.

And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure [know.

Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely  
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,

Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,  
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.

And whether it will heave us up to land,  
Or whether it will roll us out to sea.

Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,

We know not, and no search will make us know;  
 Only the event will teach us in its hour." He spoke, and Rustum answer'd not, but hurl'd  
 His spear; down from the shoulder, down it came,  
 As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,  
 That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,  
 Drops like a plummet; Sohrab saw it come,  
 And sprang aside, quick as a flash; the spear  
 Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the sand,  
 Which it sent flying wide;—then Sohrab threw  
 In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield; sharp rang,  
 The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd the spear.  
 And Rustum seized his club, which none but he  
 Could wield; an unlopp'd trunk it was, and huge,  
 Still rough—like those which men in treeless plains  
 To build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,  
 Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up By their dark springs, the wind in winter-time  
 Hath made in Himalayan forests wrack,  
 And strewn the channels with torn boughs—so huge  
 The club which Rustum lifted now, and struck  
 One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang aside,  
 Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came  
 Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.  
 And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell  
 To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sand;  
 And now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword,  
 And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay  
 Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked with sand;  
 But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared his sword,  
 But courteously drew back, and spoke, and said:—  
 "Thou strik'st too hard! that club of thine will float

Upon the summer-floods, and not my bones.  
 But rise, and be not wroth! not wroth am I;  
 No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul.  
 Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum; be it so!  
 Who art thou then, that canst so touch my soul?  
 Boy as I am, I have seen battles too—  
 Have waded foremost in their bloody waves,  
 And heard their hollow roar of dying men;  
 But never was my heart thus touch'd before.  
 Are they from Heaven, these softening of the heart?  
 O thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven!  
 Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,  
 And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,  
 And pledge each other in red wine, like friends,  
 And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds.  
 There are enough foes in the Persian host,  
 Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel no pang:  
 Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom thou  
 Mayst fight; fight *them*, when they confront thy spear!  
 But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and me!"  
 He ceased, but while he spake, Rustum had risen,  
 And stood erect, trembling with rage: his club  
 He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear.  
 Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right-hand  
 Blazed bright and baleful, like that autumn-star.  
 The baleful sign of fevers; dust had soil'd  
 His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.  
 His breast heaved, his lips foam'd, and twice his voice  
 Was choked with rage; at last these words broke way:—  
 "Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands!  
 Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words!

Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no more !  
 Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now  
 With Tartar girls, with whom thou art  
 wont to dance ;  
 But on the Oxus-sands, and in the dance  
 Of battle, and with me, who make no  
 play  
 Of war ; I fight it out, and hand to hand.  
 Speak not to me of truce, and pledge,  
 and wine !  
 Remember all thy valor ; try thy feints  
 And cunning ! all the pity I had is gone ;  
 Because thou hast shamed me before  
 both the hosts  
 With thy light skipping tricks, and thy  
 girl's wiles."  
 He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his  
 taunts,  
 And he too drew his sword ; at once  
 they rush'd  
 Together, as two eagles on one prey  
 Come rushing down together from the  
 clouds,  
 One from the east, one from the west ;  
 their shields  
 Dash'd with a clang together, and a din  
 Rose, such as that the sinewy wood-  
 cutters  
 Make often in the forest's heart at morn.  
 Of hewing axes, crashing trees—such  
 blows  
 Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.  
 And you would say that sun and stars  
 took part  
 In that unnatural conflict ; for a cloud  
 Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark'd  
 the sun  
 Over the fighters' heads ; and a wind  
 rose  
 Under their feet, and moaning swept  
 the plain.  
 And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the  
 pair.  
 In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and  
 they alone ;  
 For both the on-looking hosts on either  
 hand  
 Stood in broad daylight, and the sky  
 was pure,  
 And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.  
 But in the gloom they fought, with  
 bloodshot eyes  
 And laboring breath ; first Rustum  
 struck the shield  
 Which Sohrab held stiff out ; the steel-  
 spiked spear  
 Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach  
 the skin,

And Rustum pluck'd it back with an-  
 gry groan.  
 Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rus-  
 tum's helm,  
 Nor clove its steel quite through ; but  
 all the crest  
 He shore away, and that proud horse-  
 hair plume.  
 Never till now defiled, sank to the dust ;  
 And Rustum bow'd his head ; but then  
 the gloom  
 Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the  
 air,  
 And lightnings rent the cloud ; and  
 Ruksh, the horse,  
 Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful  
 cry ;—  
 No horse's cry was that, most like the  
 roar  
 Of some pain'd desert-lion, who all day  
 Hath trail'd the hunter's javelin in his  
 side,  
 And comes at night to die upon the  
 sand.  
 The two hosts heard that cry, and  
 quaked for fear,  
 And Oxus ourled as it cross'd his  
 stream.  
 But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but  
 rush'd on,  
 And struck again ; and again Rustum  
 bow'd  
 His head ; but this time all the blade,  
 like glass,  
 Sprang in a thousand shivers on the  
 helm,  
 And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.  
 Then Rustum raised his head ; his dread-  
 ful eyes  
 Glared, and he shook on high his menac-  
 ing spear,  
 And shouted : *Rustum !*—Sohrab heard  
 that shout,  
 And shrank amazed ; back he recoil'd  
 one step,  
 And scann'd with blinking eyes the ad-  
 vancing form ;  
 And then he stood bewilder'd ; and he  
 dropp'd  
 His covering shield, and the spear  
 pierced his side.  
 He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to  
 the ground,  
 And then the gloom dispersed, and the  
 wind fell,  
 And the bright sun broke forth, and  
 melted all  
 The cloud ; and the two armies saw the  
 pair—

Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,  
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.

Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began :—

“Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill

A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,

And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent.  
Or else that the great Rustum would come down

Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move

His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.  
And then that all the Tartar host would praise

Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame,

To glad thy father in his weak old age.  
Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown man !

Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be  
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old.”

And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab replied :—

“Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain.

Thou dost not slay me, proud and boastful man !

No ! Rustum slays me, and this filial heart.

For were I match'd with ten such men as thee,

And I were that which till to-day I was,  
They should be lying here, I standing there.

But that beloved name unnerved my arm—

That name, and something, I confess, in thee.

Which troubles all my heart, and made my shield

Fall ; and thy spear transfix'd an unarm'd foe.

And now thou boastest, and insult'st my fate.

But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble to hear

The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death !

My father, whom I seek through all the world,

He shall avenge my death, and punish thee !”

As when some hunter in the spring hath found

A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,  
Upon the craggy isle of a hill-lake,  
And pierced her with an arrow as she rose,

And follow'd her to find her where she fell

Far off ;—anon her mate comes winging back

From hunting, and a great way off describes

His huddling young left sole ; at that, he checks

His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps

Circles above his eyry, with loud screams  
Chiding his mate back to her nest ; but she

Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,  
In some far stony gorge out of his ken,

A heap of fluttering feathers—never more

Shall the lake glass her, flying over it ;  
Never the black and dripping precipices

Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—  
As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss,

So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood

Over his dying son, and knew him not.

But, with a cold incredulous voice, he said :—

“What prate is this of fathers and revenge ?

The mighty Rustum never had a son.”

And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied :—

“Ah yes, he had ! and that lost son am I  
Surely the news will one day reach his ear,

Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long,

Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here

And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap

To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee.

Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only son !

What will that grief, what will that vengeance be ?

Oh, could I live, till I that grief had seen !

Yet him I pity not so much, but her,  
My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells

With that old king, her father, who grows gray

With age, and rules over the valiant Koords.

Her most I pity, who no more will see  
 Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,  
 With spoils and honor, when the war is  
 done.  
 But a dark rumor will be bruited up,  
 From tribe to tribe, until it reach her  
 ear;  
 And then will that defenceless woman  
 learn  
 That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no  
 more,  
 But that in battle with a nameless foe,  
 By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."  
 He spoke; and as he ceased, he wept  
 aloud,  
 Thinking of her he left, and his own  
 death.  
 He spoke; but Rustum listen'd, plunged  
 in thought.  
 Nor did he yet believe it was his son  
 Who spoke, although he call'd back  
 names he knew;  
 For he had had sure tidings that the  
 babe,  
 Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,  
 Had been a puny girl, no boy at all—  
 So that sad mother sent him word, for  
 fear  
 Rustum should seek the boy, to train in  
 arms  
 And so he deem'd that either Sohrab  
 took,  
 By a false boast, the style of Rustum's  
 son;  
 Or that men gave it him, to swell his  
 fame.  
 So deem'd he; yet he listen'd, plunged  
 in thought  
 And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide  
 Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to  
 shore  
 ' At the full moon; tears gather'd in his  
 eyes;  
 For he remember'd his own early youth,  
 And all its bounding rapture; as, at  
 dawn,  
 The shepherd from his mountain-lodge  
 describes  
 A far, bright city, smitten by the sun,  
 Through many rolling clouds—so Rus-  
 tum saw  
 His youth; saw Sohrab's mother, in her  
 bloom;  
 And that old king, her father, who loved  
 well  
 His wandering guest, and gave him his  
 fair child  
 With joy; and all the pleasant life they  
 led,

They three, in that long-distant summer-  
 time—  
 The castle, and the dewy woods, and  
 hunt  
 And hound, and morn on those delight-  
 ful hills  
 In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,  
 Of age and looks to be his own dear  
 son,  
 Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,  
 Like some rich hyacinth which by the  
 scythe  
 Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,  
 Mowing the garden grass-plots near its  
 bed,  
 And lies, a fragrant tower of purple  
 bloom,  
 On the mown, dying grass—so Sohrab  
 lay,  
 Lovely in death, upon the common sand.  
 And Rustum gazed on him with grief,  
 and said:—  
 "O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son  
 Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might  
 well have loved.  
 Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men  
 Have told thee false—thou art not Rus-  
 tum's son.  
 For Rustum had no son; one child he  
 had—  
 But one—a girl; who with her mother  
 now  
 Plies some light female task, nor dreams  
 of us—  
 Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds,  
 nor war."  
 But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath;  
 for now  
 The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew  
 fierce,  
 And he desired to draw forth the steel,  
 And let the blood flow free, and so to  
 die—  
 But first he would convince his stubborn  
 foe;  
 And, rising sternly on one arm, he  
 said:—  
 "Man, who art thou who dost deny  
 my words?  
 Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,  
 And falsehood, while I lived, was far  
 from mine.  
 I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear  
 That seal which Rustum to my mother  
 gave,  
 That she might prick it on the babe she  
 bore."  
 He spoke; and all the blood left Rus-  
 tum's cheeks,

And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand  
Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,  
That the hard iron corselet clank'd aloud ;  
And to his heart he press'd the other hand,  
And in a hollow voice he spake, and said :—

“Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie !  
If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son.”

Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed  
His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,  
And show'd a sign in faint vermillion points  
Prick'd ; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,  
Pricks with vermillion some clear porcelain vase,  
An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,  
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp  
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands—

So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd  
On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.

It was that griffin, which of old rear'd Zal,  
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,  
A helpless babe, among the mountain-rocks ;  
Him that kind creature found, and rear'd, and loved—

Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.

And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,

And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,

And then he touch'd it with his hand and said :—

“How say'st thou ? Is that sign the proper sign  
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's ?”

He spoke ; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood  
Speechless ; and then he utter'd one sharp cry :

*O boy—thy father !*—and his voice choked there. [eyes.]

And then a dark cloud pass'd before his

And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.

But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast

His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,

And with fond faltering fingers strok'd his cheeks,

Trying to call him back to life ; and life came back to Rustum, and he open'd his eyes,

And they stood wide with horror ; and he seized

In both his hands the dust which lay around,

And threw it on his head ; and smirch'd his hair,—

His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms ;

And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,

And his sobs choked him ; and he clutch'd his sword.

To draw it, and for ever let life out. But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,

And with a soothing voice he spake, and said :—

“Father, forbear ! for I but meet to-day

The doom which at my birth was written down

In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.

Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,

When first I saw thee ; and thy heart spoke too,

I know it ! but fate trod those promptings down

Under its iron heel ; fate, fate engaged the strife, and hurl'd me on my father's spear.

But let us speak no more of this ! I find My father ; let me feel that I have found !

Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take

My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,

And wash them with thy tears, and say :  
*My son !*

Quick ! quick ! for number'd are my sands of life,

And swift ; for like the lightning to this field

I came, and like the wind I go away—

Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind.

But it was writ in Heaven that this should be."

So said he, and his voice released the heart  
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth ;  
he cast

His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,

And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both the hosts,

When they saw Rustum's grief ; and Ruksh, the horse,

With his head bowing to the ground and mane

Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe

First to the one, then to the other moved His head, as if inquiring what their grief

Might mean ; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,

The big warm tears roll'd down, and caked the sand.

But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said :—

" Ruksh, now thou grievest ; but, O Ruksh ; thy feet

Should first have rotted on their nimble joints,

Or ere they brought thy master to this field !"

But Sohrab look'd upon the horse and said ;—

" Is this, then, Ruksh ? How often, in past days,

My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed,

My terrible father's terrible horse ! and said,

That I should one day find thy lord and thee.

Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane !

O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I : For thou hast gone where I shall never go,

And snuff'd the breezes of my father's home,

And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,

And seen the River of Helmund, and the Lake

Of Zirrah ; and the aged Zal himself Has often stroked thy neck, and given thee food,

Corn in a golden platter soak'd with wine,

And said ; O Ruksh ! bear Rustum well ! —but I

Have never known my grandsire's furrow'd face,

Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan, Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream ;

But lodged among my father's foes, and seen

Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand, Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,

And the black Toorkmun tents ; and only drunk

The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend, Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,

The northern Sir ; and this great Oxus stream,

The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die."

Then, with a heavy groan, Rustum bewail'd :—

" Oh, that its waves were flowing over me !

Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head !"

But, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab replied :—

" Desire not that, my father ! thou must live.

For some are born to do great deeds, and live,

As some are born to be obscured, and die.

Do thou the deeds I die too young to do, And reap a second glory in thine age ;

Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine. But come ! thou seest this great host of men

Which follow me ; I pray thee, slay not these !

Let me entreat for them ; what have they done ?

They follow'd me, my hope, my fame, my star.

Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.

But me thou must bear hence, not send with them,

But carry me with thee to Seistan, And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,

Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all thy friends.

And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,

And heap a stately mound above my bones.

And plant a far-seen pillar over all.

That so the passing horseman on the waste



May see my tomb a great way off, and cry:

*Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,  
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill!*

And I be not forgotten in my grave."

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:—

"Fear not, as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,

So shall it be; for I will burn my tents,  
And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,

And carry thee away to Seistan,  
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,

With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends,

And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,  
And heap a stately mound above thy bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all,  
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.

And I will spare thy host; yea, let them go!

Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace!

What should I do with slaying any more?

For would that all that I have ever elain

Might be once more alive; my bitterest foes,

And they who were call'd champions in their time,

And through whose death I won that fame I have—

And I were nothing but a common man,  
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown,

So thou mightest live too, my son, my son!

Or rather would that I, even I myself,  
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,  
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,

Not thou of mine! and I might die, not thou;

And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;  
And Zal might weep above my grave,  
not thine;

And say: *O son I weep thee not too sore,  
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end!*

But now in blood and battles was my youth,

And full of blood and battles is my age,

And I shall never end this life of blood."

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied:—

"A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man!

But thou shalt yet have peace; only not now,

Not yet! but thou shalt have it on that day,

When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,

Thou and the other peers of Kai Kheeroo,

Returning home over the salt blue sea,  
From laying thy dear master in his grave."

And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face, and said:—

"Soon be that day, my son, and deep that sea!

Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure."

He spoke; and Sohrab smiled on him, and took

The spear, and drew it from his side, and eased

His wound's imperious anguish; but the blood

Came welling from the open gash, and life

Flow'd with the stream;—all down his cold white side

The crimson torrent ran, dim now and soil'd,

Like the soil'd tissue of white violets

Left, freshly gather'd, on the native bank,

By children whom their nurses call with haste

Indoors from the sun's eye: his head droop'd low,

His limbs grew slack; motionless, white, he lay—

White, with eyes closed; only when heavy gasps,

Deep heavy gasps quivering through all his frame,

Convulsed him back to life, he open'd them,

And fix'd them feebly on his father's face;

Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs,

Unwillingly the spirit fled away.

Regretting the warm mansion which it left,

And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead;

And the great Rustum drew his horse-  
man's cloak  
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead  
son.  
As those black granite pillars, once  
high-rear'd  
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear  
His house, now 'mid their broken flights  
of steps  
Lie prone, enormous, down the moun-  
tain side—  
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.  
And night came down over the sol-  
emn waste,  
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole  
pair,  
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with  
night,  
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum  
arose,  
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires  
Began to twinkle through the fog; for  
now  
Both armies moved to camp, and took  
their meal;  
The Persians took it on the open sands  
Southward, the Tartars by the river  
marge;  
And Rustum and his son were left alone.  
But the majestic river floated on,  
Out of the mist and hum of that low  
land.  
Into the frosty starlight, and there  
moved,  
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Choras-  
mian waste,  
Under the solitary moon;—he flow'd  
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,  
Brimming, and bright, and large; then  
sands began  
To hem his watery march, and dam his  
streams,  
And split his currents; that for many a  
league  
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains  
along  
Through beds of sand and matted rushy  
isles—  
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had  
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,  
A foil'd circuitous wanderer—till at last  
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard,  
and wide  
His luminous home of waters opens,  
bright  
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-  
bathed stars  
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

1853.

## PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the nightingale—  
The tawny-throated!  
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a  
burst!  
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,  
Still, after many years, in distant lands,  
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain  
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken,  
old-world pain—  
Say, will it never heal?  
And can this fragrant lawn  
With its cool trees, and night,  
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,  
And moonshine, and the dew,  
To thy rack'd heart and brain  
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,  
Here, through the moonlight on this  
English grass,  
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian  
wild?

Dost thou again peruse  
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes  
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's  
shame?

Dost thou once more assay  
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,  
Poor fugitive, the feathery change  
Once more, and once more seem to make  
resound

With love and hate, triumph and agony,  
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian  
vale?

Listen, Eugenia—  
How thick the bursts come crowding  
through the leaves!

Again—thou hearest?

Eternal passion!

Eternal pain! 1853.

## THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the  
hill;

Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled  
cotes!

No longer leave thy wistful flock un-  
fed.

Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their  
throats,

Nor the cropp'd herbage shoot another  
head.

But when the fields are still,  
And the tired men and dogs all gone to  
rest,

And only the white sheep are some-  
times seen  
Cross and recross the strips of moon-  
blanch'd green,  
Come, shepherd, and again begin the  
quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of  
late—  
In this high field's dark corner, where he  
leaves

His coat, his basket, and his earthen  
cruse,  
And in the sun all morning binds the  
sheaves,  
Then here, at noon, comes back his  
stores to use—

Here will I sit and wait,  
While to my ear from uplands far away  
The bleating of the folded flocks is  
borne,  
With distant cries of reapers in the  
corn—

All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-  
reap'd field,  
And here till sun-down, shepherd! will  
I be.

Through the thick corn the scarlet  
poppies peep,  
And round green roots and yellowing  
stalks I see

Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils  
creep;

And air-swept lindens yield  
Their scent, and rustle down their per-  
fumed showers

Of bloom on the bent grass where I am  
laid,

And bower me from the August sun  
with shade;

And the eye travels down to Oxford's  
towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's  
book—

Come, let me read the oft-read tale  
again!

The story of the Oxford scholar poor,  
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive  
brain,

Who, tired of knocking at prefer-  
ment's door,

One summer-morn forsook  
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-  
lore,

And roam'd the world with that wild  
brotherhood,

And came, as most men deem'd, to lit-  
tle good.  
But came to Oxford and his friends as  
more.

But once, years after, in the country-  
lanes,  
Two scholars, whom at college erst he  
knew,

Met him, and of his way of life en-  
quired;

Whereat he answer'd, that the gipsy-  
crew,

His mates, had arts to rule as they de-  
sired

The workings of men's brains,  
And they can bind them to what thoughts  
they will.

"And I," he said, "the secret of their  
art,

When fully learn'd, will to the world  
impart;

But it needs heaven-sent moments for  
this skill."

This said, he left them, and return'd as  
more.—

But rumors hung about the country-  
side,

That the lost Scholar long was seen to  
stray,

Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and  
tongue-tied,

In hat of antique shape, and cloak of  
gray,

The same the gipsies wore.  
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in  
spring;

At some lone alehouse in the Berk-  
shire moors,

On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-  
frock'd boors

Had found him seated at their entering,

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he  
would fly.

And I myself seem half to know thy  
looks,

And put the shepherds, wanderer! on  
thy trace;

And boys who in lone wheatfields scare  
the rooks

I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet  
place;

Or in my boat I lie  
Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer-  
heats,

'Mid wide grass meadows which the  
sunshine fills,

And watch the warm, green-muffled  
 Cumner hills,  
 And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy  
 retreats.  
 For most, I know, thou lov'st retired  
 ground !  
 Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,  
 Returning home on summer-nights,  
 have met  
 Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-  
 lock-hithe,  
 Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers  
 wet,  
 As the punt's rope chops round ;  
 And leaning backward in a pensive  
 dream,  
 And fostering in thy lap a heap of  
 flowers  
 Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wych-  
 wood bowers,  
 And thine eyes resting on the moonlit  
 stream.  
 And then they land, and thou art seen  
 no more !—  
 Maidens, who from the distant hamlets  
 come  
 To dance around the Fyfield elm in  
 May,  
 Oft through the darkening fields have  
 seen thee roam,  
 Or cross a stile into the public way.  
 Oft thou hast given them store  
 Of flowers—the frail-leaf'd, white anem-  
 one,  
 Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of  
 summer eves,  
 And purple orchises with spotted  
 leaves—  
 But none hath words she can report of  
 thee.  
 And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-  
 time 's here  
 In June, and many a scythe in sunshine  
 flames,  
 Men who through those wide fields of  
 breezy grass  
 Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the  
 glittering Thames,  
 To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,  
 Have often pass'd thee near  
 Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown :  
 Mark'd thine outlandish garb, thy  
 figure spare,  
 Thy dark vague eyes, and soft ab-  
 stracted air— [wast gone !  
 But, when they came from bathing, thou

At some lone homestead in the Cumner  
 hills,  
 Where at her open door the housewife  
 darns,  
 Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a  
 gate  
 To watch the threshers in the mossy  
 barns.  
 Children, who early range these slopes  
 and late  
 For cresses from the rills,  
 Have known thee eying, all an April-  
 day,  
 The springing pastures and the feeding  
 kine :  
 And mark'd thee, when the stars come  
 out and shine,  
 Through the long dewy grass move slow  
 away.  
 In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley  
 Wood—  
 Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged  
 way  
 Pitch their smoked tents, and every  
 bush you see  
 With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds  
 of gray,  
 Above the forest-ground called Thes-  
 saly—  
 The blackbird, picking food,  
 Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears  
 at all ;  
 So often has he known thee past him  
 stray.  
 Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd  
 spray,  
 And waiting for the spark from heaven  
 to fall.  
 And once, in winter, on the causeway  
 chill  
 Where home through flooded fields foot-  
 travellers go,  
 Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden  
 bridge,  
 Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with  
 the snow,  
 Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its win-  
 try ridge ?  
 And thou hast climb'd the hill,  
 And gain'd the white brow of the Cum-  
 ner range ;  
 Turn'd once to watch, while thick the  
 snowflakes fall,  
 The line of festal light in Christ-Church  
 hall—  
 Then sought thy straw in some seques-  
 ter'd grange.

But what—I dream! Two hundred years  
are flown  
Since first thy story ran through Oxford  
halls,  
And the grave Glanvil did the tale in-  
scribe  
That thou wert wander'd from the stu-  
dious walls  
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy-  
tribe;  
And thou from earth art gone  
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard  
laid—  
Some country-nook, where o'er thy un-  
known grave  
Tall grasses and white flowering net-  
tles wave,  
Under a dark, red-fruited yew-tree's  
shade.

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of  
hours!  
For what wears out the life of mortal  
men?

'Tis that from change to change their  
being rolls;  
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,  
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls  
And numb the elastic powers.  
Till having used our nerves with bliss  
and teen,  
And tired upon a thousand schemes  
our wit,  
To the just-pausing Genius we remit  
Our worn-out life, and are—what we  
have been.

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou  
perish, so?  
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one*  
desire;

Else wert thou long since number'd  
with the dead!  
Else hadst thou spent, like other men,  
thy fire!

The generations of thy peers are fled,  
And we ourselves shall go;  
But thou possessest an immortal lot,  
And we imagine thee exempt from age  
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's  
page.  
Because thou hadst—what we, alas!  
have not.

For early didst thou leave the world,  
with powers  
Fresh, undiverted to the world without.  
Firm to their mark, not spent on other  
things;

Free from the sick fatigue, the languid  
doubt,  
Which much to have tried, in much  
been baffled, brings.  
O life unlike to ours!  
Who fluctuate idly without term or  
scope,  
Of whom each strives, nor knows for  
what he strives,  
And each half lives a hundred differ-  
ent lives;  
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee,  
in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven!  
and we,  
Light half-believers of our casual creeds.  
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly  
will'd,  
Whose insight never has borne fruit in  
deeds,  
Whose vague resolves never have been  
fulfill'd;  
For whom each year we see  
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments  
new;  
Who hesitate and falter life away,  
And lose to-morrow the ground won  
to-day—  
Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too!

Yes, we await it!—but it still delays.  
And then we suffer! and amongst us one,  
Who most has suffer'd, takes dejectedly  
His seat upon the intellectual throne:  
And all his store of sad experience he  
Lays bare of wretched days;  
Tells us his misery's birth and growth  
and signs,  
And how the dying spark of hope was  
fed,  
And how the breast was soothed, and  
how the head,  
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest! and we others pine.  
And wish the long unhappy dream  
would end,  
And waive all claim to bliss, and try  
to bear;  
With close-lipp'd patience for our only  
friend,  
Sad patience, too near neighbor to  
despair—  
But none has hope like thine!  
Thou through the fields and through the  
woods dost stray,  
Roaming the country-side, a truant  
boy,

Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,  
And every doubt long blown by time  
away.

O born in days when wits were fresh  
and clear,  
And life ran gaily as the sparkling  
Thames ;

Before the strange disease of modern  
life,

With its sick hurry, its divided aims,  
Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts,  
was rife—

Fly hence, our contact fear !  
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering  
wood !

Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern  
From her false friend's approach in  
Hades turn,

Wave us away and keep thy solitude !

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,  
Still clutching the inviolable shade,

With a free onward impulse brushing  
through,

By night, the silver'd branches of the  
glade—

Far on the forest-skirts, where none  
pursue,

On some mild pastoral slope  
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales

Freshen thy flowers as in former years  
With dew, or listen with enchanted  
ears,

From the dark dingles, to the nightin-  
gales !

But fly our paths, our feverish contact  
fly !

For strong the infection of our mental  
strife.

Which, though it gives no bliss, yet  
spoils for rest ;

And we should win thee from thy own  
fair life.

Like us distracted, and like us unblest.  
Soon, soon thy cheer would die.

Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd  
thy powers.

And thy clear aims be cross and shift-  
ing made ;

And then thy glad perennial youth  
would fade,

Fade and grow old at last, and die like  
ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and  
smiles !

—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the  
sea,

Descried at sunrise an emerging prow  
Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,  
The fringes of a southward-facing brow

Among the *Ægean* Isles ;

And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,  
Freighted with amber grapes, and

Chian wine,

Green, bursting figs, and tunnies  
steep'd in brine—

And knew the intruders on his ancient  
home,

The young light-hearted masters of the  
waves—

And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out  
more sail ;

And day and night held on indignantly  
O'er the Blue Midland waters with the  
gale,

Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,  
To where the Atlantic raves

Outside the western straits ; and unbent  
sails

There, where down cloudy cliffs,  
through sheets of foam,

Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians  
come ;

And on the beach undid his corded bales.  
1853.

## FROM BALDER DEAD

### SECTION III

THE Gods held talk together, group'd in  
knots,

Round Balder's corpse, which they had  
thither borne ;

And Hermod came down tow'ards them  
from the gate.

And Lok, the father of the serpent, first  
Beheld him come, and to his neighbor  
spake :—

“ See, here is Hermod, who comes  
single back

From Hell ; and shall I tell thee how he  
seems ?

Like as a farmer, who hath lost his dog,  
Some morn, at market, in a crowded  
town—

Through many streets the poor beast  
runs in vain,

And follows this man after that, for  
hours ;

And, late at evening, spent and panting,  
falls

Before a stranger's threshold, not his  
home,

With flanks a-tremble, and his slender  
tongue

Hangs quivering out between his dust-smear'd jaws,  
 And piteously he eyes the passers by ;  
 But home his master comes to his own farm,  
 Far in the country, wondering where he is—  
 So Hermod comes to-day unfollow'd home."  
 And straight his neighbor, moved with wrath, replied :—  
 "Deceiver! fair in form, but false in heart!  
 Enemy, mocker, whom, though Gods, we hate—  
 Peace, lest our father Odin hear thee gibe!  
 Would I might see him snatch thee in his hand,  
 And bind thy carcass, like a bale, with cords,  
 And hurl thee in a lake, to sink or swim!  
 If clear from plotting Balder's death, to swim;  
 But deep, if thou devisedst it, to drown,  
 And perish, against fate, before thy day."  
 So they two soft to one another spake.  
 But Odin look'd toward the land, and saw  
 His messenger; and he stood forth, and cried.  
 And Hermod came, and leapt from Sleipner down,  
 And in his father's hand put Sleipner's rein,  
 And greeted Odin and the Gods, and said :—  
 "Odin, my father, and ye, Gods of Heaven!  
 Lo, home, having perform'd your will, I come.  
 Into the joyless kingdom have I been,  
 Below, and look'd upon the shadowy tribes  
 Of ghosts, and communed with their solemn queen:  
 And to your prayer she sends you this reply:  
*Show her through all the world the signs of grief!*  
*Fails but one thing to grieve, there Balder stops!*  
*Let Gods, men, brutes, bewep him; plants and stones:*  
*So shall she know your loss was dear indeed,*  
*And bend her heart and give you Balder back."*  
 He spoke; and all the Gods to Odin look'd;

And straight the Father of the ages said :—  
 "Ye Gods, these terms may keep another day.  
 But now, put on your arms, and mount your steeds,  
 And in procession all come near, and weep  
 Balder; for that is what the dead desire.  
 When ye enough have wept, then build a pile  
 Of the heap'd wood, and burn his corpse with fire  
 Out of our sight; that we may turn from grief,  
 And lead, as erst, our daily life in Heaven."  
 He spoke, and the Gods arm'd; and Odin donn'd  
 His dazzling corslet and his helm of gold,  
 And led the way on Sleipner; and the rest  
 Follow'd, in tears, their father and their king.  
 And thrice in arms around the dead they rode,  
 Weeping; the sands were wetted, and their arms,  
 With their thick-falling tears—so good a friend  
 They mourn'd that day, so bright, so loved a God.  
 And Odin came, and laid his kingly hands  
 On Balder's breast, and thus began the wail :—  
 "Farewell, O Balder, bright and loved, my son!  
 In that great day, the twilight of the Gods,  
 When Muspel's children shall beleague Heaven,  
 Then we shall miss thy counsel and thy arm."  
 Thou camest near the next, O warrior Thor!  
 Shouldering thy hammer, in thy chariot drawn,  
 Swaying the long-hair'd goats with silver'd rein;  
 And over Balder's corpse these words didst say :—  
 "Brother, thou dwellest in the darksome land,  
 And talkest with the feeble tribes of ghosts,  
 Now, and I know not how they prize thee there— [and mourn'd  
 But here, I know, thou wilt be miss'd

For haughty spirits and high wraths are  
rife  
Among the Gods and Heroes here in  
Heaven,  
As among those whose joy and work is  
war;  
And daily strifes arise, and angry words.  
But from thy lips, O Balder, night or  
day,  
Heard no one ever an injurious word  
To God or Hero, but thou keptest back  
The others, laboring to compose their  
brawls.  
Be ye then kind, as Balder too was kind!  
For we lose him, who smoothed all strife  
in Heaven."  
He spake, and all the Gods assenting  
wail'd.  
And Freya next came nigh, with golden  
tears;  
The loveliest Goddess she in Heaven, by  
all  
Most honor'd after Freya, Odin's wife.  
Her long ago the wandering Oder took  
To mate, but left her to roam distant  
lands;  
Since then she seeks him, and weeps tears  
of gold.  
Names hath she many; Vanadis on  
earth  
They call her, Freya is her name in  
Heaven;  
She in her hands took Balder's head, and  
spake:—  
"Balder, my brother, thou art gone a  
road  
Unknown and long, and haply on that  
way  
My long-lost wandering Oder thou hast  
met,  
For in the paths of Heaven he is not  
found.  
Oh, if it be so, tell him what thou wast  
To his neglected wife, and what he is,  
And wring his heart with shame, to hear  
thy word!  
For he, my husband, left me here to pine,  
Not long a wife, when his unquiet heart  
First drove him from me into distant  
lands;  
Since then I vainly seek him through  
the world,  
And weep from shore to shore my golden  
tears,  
But neither god nor mortal heeds my  
pain.  
Thou only, Balder, wast for ever kind,  
To take my hand, and wipe my tears,  
and say:

*Weep not, O Freya, weep no golden tears!  
One day the wandering Oder will return!  
Or thou wilt find him in thy faithful  
search*  
*On some great road, or resting in an inn,  
Or at a ford, or sleeping by a tree.*  
So Balder said;—but Oder, well I know,  
My truant Oder I shall see no more  
To the world's end; and Balder now is  
gone,  
And I am left uncomforted in Heaven."  
She spake; and all the Goddesses be-  
wail'd.  
Last from among the Heroes one came  
near,  
No God, but of the hero-troop the chief—  
Regner, who swept the northern sea with  
fleets,  
And ruled o'er Denmark and the heathy  
isles,  
Living; but Ella captured him and  
slew;—  
A king whose fame then fill'd the vast of  
Heaven.  
Now time obscures it, and men's later  
deeds.  
He last approach'd the corpse, and  
spake, and said:—  
"Balder, there yet are many Scalds  
in Heaven  
Still left, and that chief Scald, thy  
brother Brage,  
Whom we may bid to sing, though  
thou art gone.  
And all these gladly, while we drink,  
we hear,  
After the feast is done, in Odin's hall;  
But they harp ever on one string, and  
wake  
Remembrance in our soul of wars alone,  
Such as on earth we valiantly have  
waged,  
And blood, and ringing blows, and  
violent death.  
But when thou sangest, Balder, thou  
didst strike  
Another note, and, like a bird in spring,  
Thy voice of joyance minded us, and  
youth,  
And wife, and children, and our ancient  
home.  
Yes, and I, too, remember'd then no  
more  
My dungeon, where the serpents stung  
me dead,  
Nor Ella's victory on the English coast—  
But I heard Thora laugh in Gothland  
Isle,  
And saw my shepherdess Aslauga, tend



Her flock along the white Norwegian  
beach.  
Tears started to mine eyes with yearn-  
ing joy,  
Therefore with grateful heart I mourn  
thee dead."

So Regner spake, and all the Heroes  
groan'd.

But now the sun had pass'd the height  
of Heaven,

And soon had all that day been spent in  
wail;

But then the Father of the ages said:—

"Ye Gods, there well may be too  
much of wail!

Bring now the gather'd wood to Balder's  
ship;

Heap on the deck the logs, and build the  
pyre."

But when the Gods and Heroes heard,  
they brought

The wood to Balder's ship, and built a  
pile,

Full the deck's breadth, and lofty; then  
the corpse

Of Balder on the highest top they laid,  
With Nanna on his right, and on his  
left

Hoder, his brother, whom his own hand  
slew.

And they set jars of wine and oil to lean  
Against the bodies, and stuck torches  
near,

Splinters of pine-wood, soak'd with tur-  
pentine;

And brought his arms and gold, and all  
his stuff,

And slew the dogs who at his table fed,  
And his horse, Balder's horse, whom  
most he loved,

And placed them on the pyre, and Odin  
threw

A last choice gift thereon, his golden  
ring.

The mast they fixed, and hoisted up the  
sails,

Then they put fire to the wood; and  
Thor <sup>[stern</sup>

Set his stout shoulder hard against the  
To push the ship through the thick sand;

sparks flew  
From the deep trench she plough'd, so  
strong a God

Furrow'd it; and the water gurgled in.  
And the ship floated on the waves, and  
rock'd.

But in the hills a strong east-wind arose,  
And came down moaning to the sea;  
first squalls

Ran black o'er the sea's face, then steady  
rush'd

The breeze, and fill'd the sails, and blew  
the fire.

And wreathed in smoke the ship stood  
out to sea.

Soon with a roaring rose the mighty  
fire,

And the pile crackled; and between the  
logs

Sharp quivering tongues of flame shot  
out, and leaped,

Curling and darting, higher, until they  
lick'd

The summit of the pile, the dead, the  
mast,

And ate the shrivelling sails; but still  
the ship

Drove on, ablaze above her hull with  
fire.

And the Gods stood upon the beach, and  
gazed.

And while they gazed, the sun went  
lurid down

Into the smoke-wrapt sea, and night  
came on.

Then the wind fell, with night, and  
there was calm;

But through the dark they watch'd the  
burning ship

Still carried o'er the distant waters on.  
Farther and farther, like an eye of fire.

And long, in the far dark, blazed Balder's  
pile;

But fainter, as the stars rose high, it  
flared,

The bodies were consumed, ash choked  
the pile.

And as, in a decaying winter-fire,  
A char'd log, falling, makes a shower  
of sparks—

So with a shower of sparks the pile fell  
in,

Reddening the sea around; and all was  
dark.

But the Gods went by starlight up the  
shore

To Asgard, and sate down in Odin's hall  
At table, and the funeral-feast began.

All night they ate the boar Serimner's  
flesh,

And from their horns, with silver  
rimm'd, drank mead.

Silent, and waited for the sacred morn.  
And morning over all the world was  
spread.

Then from their loathed feasts the Gods  
arose. <sup>[ride</sup>

And took their horses, and set forth to

O'er the bridge Bifrost, where is Heim-  
dall's watch,  
To the ash Igdrasil, and Ida's plain;  
Thor came on foot, the rest on horse-  
back rode.  
And they found Mimir sitting by his  
fount  
Of wisdom, which beneath the ashtree  
springs;  
And saw the Nornies watering the roots  
Of that world-shadowing tree with  
honey-dew.  
There came the Gods, and sate them  
down on stones;  
And thus the Father of the ages said:—  
“Ye Gods, the terms ye know, which  
Hermod brought.  
Accept them or reject them! both have  
grounds.  
Accept them, and they bind us, unful-  
fill'd,  
To leave for ever Balder in the grave.  
An unrecover'd prisoner, shade with  
shades.  
But how, ye say, should the fulfilment  
fail?—  
Smooth sound the terms, and light to  
be fulfill'd;  
For dear-beloved was Balder while he  
lived  
In Heaven and earth, and who would  
grudge him tears?  
But from the traitorous seed of Lok  
they come,  
These terms, and I suspect some hidden  
fraud.  
Bethink ye, Gods, is there no other  
way?—  
Speak, were not this a way, the way for  
Gods?  
If I, if Odin, clad in radiant arms,  
Mounted on Sleipner, with the warrior  
Thor  
Drawn in his car beside me, and my  
sons,  
All the strong brood of Heaven, to swell  
my train,  
Should make irruption into Hela's realm,  
And set the fields of gloom ablaze with  
light,  
And bring in triumph Balder back to  
Heaven?”  
He spake, and his fierce sons applauded  
loud.  
But Frea, mother of the Gods, arose,  
Daughter and wife of Odin; thus she  
said:—  
“Odin, thou whirlwind, what a threat  
is this!

Thou threatenest what transcends thy  
might, even thine.  
For of all powers the mightiest far art  
thou,  
Lord over men on earth, and Gods in  
Heaven;  
Yet even from thee thyself hath been  
withheld  
One thing—to undo what thou thyself  
hast ruled.  
For all which hath been fixt, was fixt  
by thee.  
In the beginning, ere the Gods were  
born,  
Before the Heavens were builded, thou  
didst slay  
The giant Ymir, whom the abyss brought  
forth,  
Thou and thy brethren fierce, the sons  
of Bor,  
And cast his trunk to choke the abysmal  
void.  
But of his flesh and members thou didst  
build  
The earth and Ocean, and above them  
Heaven.  
And from the flaming world, where  
Muspel reigns,  
Thou sent'st and fetched'st fire, and  
madest lights,  
Sun, moon, and stars, which thou hast  
hung in Heaven,  
Dividing clear the paths of night and  
day.  
And Asgard thou didst build, and Mid-  
gard fort;  
Then me thou mad'st; of us the Gods  
were born.  
Last, walking by the sea, thou foundest  
spars  
Of wood, and framed'st men, who till  
the earth,  
Or on the sea, the field of pirates, sail.  
And all the race of Ymir thou didst  
drown,  
Save one, Bergelmer;—he on shipboard  
fled  
Thy deluge, and from him the giants  
sprang.  
But all that brood thou hast removed  
far off,  
And set by Ocean's utmost marge to  
dwell;  
But Hela into Nifheim thou threw'st,  
And gav'st her nine unlighted worlds to  
rule,  
A queen, and empire over all the dead.  
That empire wilt thou now invade, light  
up

Her darkness, from her grasp a subject  
tear?—

Try it; but I, for one, will not applaud.  
Nor do I merit, Odin, thou should'st slight  
Me and my words, though thou be first  
in Heaven;

For I too am a Goddess, born of thee,  
Thine eldest, and of me the Gods are  
sprung;

And all that is to come I know, but look  
In mine own breast, and have to none  
reveal'd.

Come then! since Hela holds by right  
her prey,

But offers terms for his release to  
Heaven,

Accept the chance; thou canst no more  
obtain.

Send through the world thy messengers;  
entreat

All living and unliving things to weep  
For Balder; if thou haply thus may'st  
melt

Hela, and win the loved one back to  
Heaven."

She spake, and on her face let fall her  
veil,

And bow'd her head, and sate with  
folded hands.

Nor did the all-ruling Odin slight her  
word;

Straightway he spake, and thus ad-  
dress'd the Gods:

"Go quickly forth through all the  
world, and pray

All living and unliving things to weep  
Balder, if haply he may thus be won."

When the Gods heard, they straight  
arose, and took

Their horses, and rode forth through all  
the world;

North, south, east, west, they struck,  
and roam'd the world

Entreating all things to weep Balder's  
death.

And all that lived, and all without life,  
wept.

And as in winter, when the frost breaks  
up,

At winter's end, before the spring  
begins,

And a warm west-wind blows, and  
thaw sets in—

After an hour a dripping sound is heard  
In all the forests, and the soft-strewn  
snow

Under the trees is dibbled thick with  
holes, [shuffle down;

And from the boughs the snowloads

And, in fields sloping to the south, dark  
plots

Of grass peep out amid surrounding  
snow,

And widen, and the peasant's heart is  
glad—

So through the world was heard a drip-  
ping noise

Of all things weeping to bring Balder  
back;

And there fell joy upon the Gods to hear.  
But Hermod rode with Niord, whom

he took

To show him spits and beaches of the sea  
Far off, where some unwarn'd might  
fail to weep—

Niord, the God of storms, whom fishes  
know;

Not born in Heaven; he was in Van-  
heim rear'd,

With men; but lives a hostage with the  
Gods;

He knows each frith, and every rocky  
creek

Fringed with dark pines, and sate  
where seafowl scream—

They two scour'd every coast, and all  
things wept.

And they rode home together, through  
the wood

Of Jarnvid, which to east of Midgard lies  
Bordering the giants, where the trees

are iron;

There in the wood before a cave they  
came,

Where sate, in the cave's mouth, a skinny  
hag,

Toothless and old; she gibes the passers  
by.

Thok is she call'd, but now Lok wore her  
shape;

She greeted them the first, and laugh'd,  
and said:—

"Ye Gods, good lack, is it so dull in  
Heaven,

That ye come pleasuring to Thok's iron  
wood?

Lovers of change ye are, fastidious  
sprites.

Look, as in some boor's yard a sweet-  
breath'd cow,

Whose manger is stuff'd full of good  
fresh hay,

Snuffs at it daintily, and stoops her head  
To chew the straw, her litter, at her feet—

So ye grow squeamish, Gods, and sniff  
at Heaven!"

She spake; but Hermod answer'd her  
and said:—

"Thok, not for gibes we come, we come  
for tears.

Balder is dead, and Hela holds her prey,  
But will restore, if all things give him  
tears.

Begrudge not thine! to all was Balder  
dear."

Then, with a louder laugh, the hag  
replied:—

"Is Balder dead? and do ye come for  
tears?

Thok with dry eyes will weep o'er  
Balder's pyre,

Weep him all other things, if weep they  
will—

I weep him not! let Hela keep her prey."  
She spake, and to the cavern's depth  
she fled,

Mocking; and Hermod knew their toil  
was vain.

And as seafaring men, who long have  
wrought

In the great deep for gain, at last come  
home,

And towards evening see the headlands  
rise

Of their dear country, and can plain  
descry

A fire of wither'd furze which boys have  
lit

Upon the cliffs, or smoke of burning  
weeds

Out of a till'd field inland;—then the  
wind

Catches them, and drives out again to  
sea;

And they go long days tossing up and  
down

Over the gray sea-ridges, and the glimpse  
Of port they had makes bitterer far their  
toil—

So the Gods' cross was bitterer for their  
joy.

Then, sad at heart, to Niord Hermod  
spake:—

"It is the accuser Lok, who flouts us all!  
Ride back, and tell in Heaven this heavy  
news;

I must again below, to Hela's realm."

He spoke; and Niord set forth back to  
Heaven.

But northward Hermod rode, the way  
below,

The way he knew; and traversed Giall's  
stream,

And down to Ocean groped, and cross'd  
the ice,

And came beneath the wall, and found  
the grate

Still lifted; well was his return fore-  
known.

And once more Hermod saw around him  
spread

The joyless plains, and heard the streams  
of Hell.

But as he enter'd, on the extremest  
bound

Of Niflheim, he saw one ghost come  
near,

Hovering, and stopping oft, as if afraid—  
Hoder, the unhappy, whom his own hand

slew.

And Hermod look'd, and knew his  
brother's ghost,

And call'd him by his name, and sternly  
said:—

"Hoder, ill-fated, blind in heart and  
eyes!

Why tarriest thou to plunge thee in the  
gulf

Of the deep inner gloom, but flitest here,  
In twilight, on the lonely verge of Hell,

Far from the other ghosts, and Hela's  
throne?

Doubtless thou fearest to meet Balder's  
voice,

Thy brother, whom through folly thou  
didst slay."

He spoke; but Hoder answer'd him,  
and said:—

"Hermod the nimble, dost thou still  
pursue

The unhappy with reproach, even in the  
grave?

For this I died, and fled beneath the  
gloom,

Not daily to endure abhorring Gods,  
Nor with a hateful presence cumber

Heaven;

And canst thou not, even here, pass pity-  
ing by?

No less than Balder have I lost the light  
Of Heaven, and communion with my kin;

I too had once a wife, and once a child,  
And substance, and a golden house in

Heaven—

But all I left of my own act, and fled  
Below, and dost thou hate me even here?

Balder upbraids me not, nor hates at all,  
Though he has cause, have any cause;

but he,  
When that with downcast looks I hither  
came,

Stretch'd forth his hand, and with be-  
nignant voice,

Welcome, he said, *if there be welcome  
here.*

*Brother and fellow-sport of Lok with me!*

And not to offend thee, Hermod, nor to  
force  
My hated converse on thee, came I up  
From the deep gloom, where I will now  
return ;

But earnestly I long'd to hover near,  
Not too far off, when that thou camest by;  
To feel the presence of a brother God,  
And hear the passage of a horse of  
Heaven,  
For the last time—for here thou com'st  
no more."

He spake, and turn'd to go to the inner  
gloom.

But Hermod stay'd him with mild words,  
and said :—

"Thou doest well to chide me, Hoder  
blind !

Truly thou say'st, the planning guilty  
mind

Was Lok's; the unwitting hand alone  
was thine.

But Gods are like the sons of men in  
this

When they have woe, they blame the  
nearest cause.

Howbeit stay, and be appeased ! and  
tell :

Sits Balder still in pomp by Hela's side,  
Or is he mingled with the unnumber'd  
dead ?"

And the blind Hoder answer'd him  
and spake :—

"His place of state remains by Hela's  
side,

But empty ; for his wife, for Nanna  
came

Lately below, and join'd him ; and the  
pair

Frequent the still recesses of the realm  
Of Hela, and hold converse undisturb'd.

But they too, doubtless, will have  
breathed the balm,

Which floats before a visitant from  
Heaven,

And have drawn upward to this verge of  
Hell."

He spake ; and, as he ceased, a puff  
of wind

Roll'd heavily the leaden mist aside  
Round where they stood, and they be-  
held two forms

Make toward them o'er the stretching  
cloudy plain.

And Hermod straight perceived them,  
who they were

Balder and Nanna ; and to Balder said :—

"Balder, too truly thou foresaw'st a  
snare !

Lok triumphs still, and Hela keeps her  
prey.

No more to Asgard shalt thou come, nor  
lodge

In thy own house, Breidablik, nor enjoy  
The love all bear toward thee, nor turn  
up

Forset, thy son, to be beloved like thee.  
Here must thou lie, and wait an endless  
age.

Therefore for the last time, O Balder,  
hail !"

He spake ; and Balder answer'd him,  
and said :—

"Hail and farewell ! for here thou  
com'st no more.

Yet mourn not for me, Hermod, when  
thou sitt'st

In Heaven, nor let the other Gods  
lament,

As wholly to be pitied, quite forlorn.

For Nanna hath rejoin'd me, who, of old,  
In Heaven, was seldom parted from my  
side ;

And still the acceptance follows me,  
which crown'd

My former life, and cheers me even now.  
The iron frown of Hela is relax'd

When I draw nigh, and the wan tribes  
of dead

Love me, and gladly bring for my award  
Their ineffectual feuds and feeble hates—  
Shadows of hates, but they distress  
them still."

And the fleet-footed Hermod made  
reply :—

"Thou hast then all the solace death  
allows.

Esteem and function ; and so far is well  
Yet here thou liest, Balder, underground.

Rusting for ever ; and the years roll on,  
The generations pass, the ages grow,

And bring us nearer to the final day  
When from the south shall march the  
fiery band

And cross the bridge of Heaven, with  
Lok for guide,

And Fenris at his heel with broken  
chain ;

While from the east the giant Rymr  
steers

His ship, and the great serpent makes to  
land ;

And all are marshall'd in one flaming  
square

Against the Gods, upon the plains of  
Heaven.

I mourn thee, that thou canst not help  
us then."

He spake ; but Balder answer'd him,  
and said :—  
“ Mourn not for me ! Mourn, Hermod,  
for the Gods ;  
Mourn for the men on earth, the Gods  
in Heaven,  
Who live, and with their eyes shall see  
that day !  
The day will come, when fall shall As-  
gard's towers,  
And Odin, and his sons, the seed of  
Heaven ;  
But what were I, to save them in that  
hour ?  
If strength might save them, could not  
Odin save,  
My father, and his pride, the warrior  
Thor.  
Vidar the silent, the impetuous Tyr ?  
I, what were I, when these can nought  
avail ?  
Yet, doubtless, when the day of battle  
comes,  
And the two hosts are marshall'd, and  
in Heaven  
The golden-crested cock shall sound  
alarm,  
And his black brother-bird from hence  
reply,  
And bucklers clash, and spears begin to  
pour—  
Longing will stir within my breast,  
though vain.  
But not to me so grievous, as, I know,  
To other Gods it were, is my enforced  
Absence from fields where I could noth-  
ing aid ;  
For I am long since weary of your storm  
Of carnage, and find, Hermod, in your  
life  
Something too much of war and broils,  
which make  
Life one perpetual fight, a bath of blood.  
Mine eyes are dizzy with the arrowy  
hail ;  
Mine ears are stunn'd with blows, and  
sick for calm.  
Inactive therefore let me lie, in gloom,  
Unarm'd, inglorious ; I attend the course  
Of ages, and my late return to light,  
In times less alien to a spirit mild,  
In new-recover'd seats, the happier day.”  
He spake ; and the fleet Hermod thus  
replied :—  
“ Brother, what seats are these, what  
happier day ?  
Tell me, that I may ponder it when  
gone.” [him :—  
And the ray-crowned Balder answer'd

“ Far to the south, beyond the blue,  
there spreads  
Another Heaven, the boundless—no one  
yet  
Hath reach'd it ; there hereafter shall  
arise  
The second Asgard, with another name.  
Thither, when o'er this present earth  
and Heavens  
The tempest of the latter days hath  
swept,  
And they from sight have disappear'd,  
and sunk,  
Shall a small remnant of the Gods re-  
pair ;  
Hoder and I shall join them from the  
grave.  
There re-assembling we shall see emerge  
From the bright Ocean at our feet an  
earth  
More fresh, more verdant than the last,  
with fruits  
Self-springing, and a seed of man pre-  
served,  
Who then shall live in peace, as now in  
war.  
But we in Heaven shall find again with  
joy  
The ruin'd palaces of Odin, seats  
Familiar, halls where we have suppd of  
old ;  
Re-enter them with wonder, never fill  
Our eyes with gazing, and rebuild with  
tears.  
And we shall tread once more the well-  
known plain  
Of Ida, and among the grass shall find  
The golden dice wherewith we play'd of  
yore ;  
And that will bring to mind the former  
life  
And pastime of the Gods, the wise dis-  
course  
Of Odin, the delights of other days.  
O Hermod, pray that thou may'st join  
us then !  
Such for the future is my hope ; mean-  
while,  
I rest the thrall of Hela, and endure  
Death, and the gloom which round me  
even now  
Thickens, and to its inner gulf recalls.  
Farewell, for longer speech is not al-  
low'd !”  
He spoke, and waved farewell, and  
gave his hand  
To Nanna ; and she gave their brother  
blind [the three  
Her hand, in turn, for guidance ; and

Departed o'er the cloudy plain, and soon  
 Faded from sight into the interior gloom.  
 But Hermod stood beside his drooping  
 horse,  
 Mute, gazing after them in tears; and  
 fain,  
 Fain had he follow'd their receding steps,  
 Though they to death were bound, and  
 he to Heaven,  
 Then; but a power he could not break  
 withheld.  
 And as a stork which idle boys have  
 trapp'd,  
 And tied him in a yard, at autumn sees  
 Flocks of his kind pass flying o'er his  
 head  
 To warmer lands, and coasts that keep  
 the sun:—  
 He strains to join their flight, and from  
 his shed  
 Follows them with a long complaining  
 cry—  
 So Hermod gazed, and yearn'd to join  
 his kin.

At last he sigh'd, and set forth back  
 to Heaven. 1855.

#### STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

THROUGH Alpine meadows soft-suffused  
 With rain, where thick the crocus blows,  
 Past the dark forges long disused,  
 The mule-track from Saint Laurent goes.  
 The bridge is cross'd, and slow we ride,  
 Through forest, up the mountain-side.

The autumnal evening darkens round,  
 The wind is up, and drives the rain;  
 While, hark! far down, with strangled  
 sound

Doth the Dead Guier's stream complain,  
 Where that wet smoke, among the  
 woods.

Over his boiling cauldron broods.

Swift rush the spectral vapors white  
 Past limestone scars with ragged pines,  
 Showing—then blotting from our  
 sight!—

Halt—through the cloud-drift something  
 shines!

High in the valley, wet and drear,  
 The huts of Courrerie appear.

Strike *leftward!* cries our guide; and  
 higher

Mounts up the stony forest-way.  
 At last the encircling trees retire;

Look! through the showery twilight  
 gray  
 What pointed roofs are these advance!—  
 A palace of the Kings of France?

Approach, for what we seek is here!  
 Alight, and sparsely sup, and wait  
 For rest in this outbuilding near;  
 Then cross the sward and reach the  
 gate.

Knock; pass the wicket! Thou art  
 come  
 To the Carthusians' world-famed home

The silent courts, where night and day  
 Into their stone-carved basins cold  
 The splashing icy fountains play—  
 The humid corridors behold!  
 Where, ghostlike in the deepening night  
 Cow'd forms brush by in gleaming  
 white.

The chapel, where no organ's peal  
 Invests the stern and naked prayer—  
 With penitential cries they kneel  
 And wrestle; rising then, with bare  
 And white uplifted faces stand,  
 Passing the Host from hand to hand;

Each takes, and then his visage wan  
 Is buried in his cowl once more.  
 The cells!—the suffering Son of Man  
 Upon the wall—the knee-worn floor—  
 And where they sleep, that wooden bed.  
 Which shall their coffin be, when dead?

The library, where tract and tome  
 Not to feed priestly pride are there.  
 To hymn the conquering march of Rome.  
 Nor yet to amuse, as ours are!  
 They paint of souls the inner strife.  
 Their drops of blood, their death in life.

The garden, overgrown—yet mild,  
 See, fragrant herbs are flowering there!  
 Strong children of the Alpine wild  
 Whose culture is the brethren's care;  
 Of human tasks their only one,  
 And cheerful works beneath the sun.

Those halls, too, destined to contain  
 Each its own pilgrim-host of old,  
 From England, Germany, or Spain—  
 All are before me! I behold  
 The House, the Brotherhood austere!  
 —And what am I, that I am here?

For rigorous teachers seized my youth  
 And purged its faith, and trimm'd its  
 fire,



Show'd me the high, white star of Truth,  
There bade me gaze, and there aspire.  
Even now their whispers pierce the  
gloom;

*What dost thou in this living tomb?*

Forgive me, masters of the mind!  
At whose behest I long ago  
So much unlearn't, so much resign'd—  
I come not here to be your foe!  
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,  
To curse and to deny your truth;

Not as their friend, or child, I speak!  
But as, on some far northern strand,  
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek  
In pity and mournful awe might stand  
Before some fallen Runic stone—  
For both were faiths, and both are gone.

Wandering between two worlds, one  
dead,

The other powerless to be born,  
With nowhere yet to rest my head,  
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.  
Their faith, my tears, the world deride—  
I come to shed them at their side.

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,  
Ye solemn seats of holy pain!  
Take me, cowl'd forms, and fence me  
round

Till I possess my soul again;  
Till free my thoughts before me roll,  
Not chafed by hourly false control!

For the world cries your faith is now  
But a dead time's exploded dream;  
My melancholy, sciolists say,  
Is a pass'd mode, an outworn theme—  
As if the world had ever had  
A faith, or sciolists been sad!

Ah, if it be pass'd, take away,  
At least, the restlessness, the pain;  
Be man henceforth no more a prey  
To these out-dated stings again!  
The nobleness of grief is gone—  
Ah, leave us not the fret alone!

But—if you cannot give us ease—  
Last of the race of them who grieve  
Here leave us to die out with these  
Last of the people who believe!  
Silent, while years engrave the brow;  
Silent—the best are silent now.

Achilles ponders in his tent,  
The kings of modern thought are dumb;  
Silent they are, though not content,

And wait to see the future come.  
They have the grief men had of yore,  
But they contend and cry no more.

Our fathers water'd with their tears  
This sea of time whereon we sail,  
Their voices were in all men's ears  
We pass'd within their puissant hail.  
Still the same ocean round us raves,  
But we stand mute, and watch the waves.

For what avail'd it, all the noise  
And outcry of the former men?—  
Say, have their sons achieved more joys,  
Say, is life lighter now than then;  
The sufferers died, they left their pain—  
The pangs which tortured them remain.

What helps it now, that Byron bore,  
With haughty scorn which mock'd the  
smart,

Through Europe to the Ætolian shore  
The pageant of his bleeding heart?  
That thousands counted every groan,  
And Europe made his woe her own?

What boots it, Shelley! that the breeze  
Carried thy lovely wail away,  
Musical through Italian trees  
Which fringe thy soft blue Spezzian  
bay?

Inheritors of thy distress  
Have restless hearts one throb the less?

Or are we easier, to have read,  
O Obermann! the sad, stern page,  
Which tells us how thou hid'st thy  
head

From the fierce tempest of thine age  
In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,  
Or chalets near the Alpine snow?

Ye slumber in your silent grave!—  
The world, which for an idle day  
Grace to your mood of sadness gave,  
Long since hath flung her weeds away.  
The eternal trifler breaks your spell;  
But we—we learned your lore too well!

Years hence, perhaps, may dawn an age,  
More fortunate, alas! than we,  
Which without hardness will be sage,  
And gay without frivolity.  
Sons of the world, oh, speed those years;  
But, while we wait, allow our tears!

Allow them! We admire with awe  
The exulting thunder of your race;  
You give the universe your law,



You triumph over time and space !  
Your pride of life, your tireless powers,  
We laud them, but they are not ours.

We are like children rear'd in shade  
Beneath some old-world abbey wall,  
Forgotten in a forest-glade,  
And secret from the eyes of all.  
Deep, deep the greenwood round them  
waves,  
Their abbey, and its close of graves !

But, where the road runs near the stream,  
Off through the trees they catch a glance  
Of passing troops in the sun's beam—  
Pennon, and plume, and flashing lance !  
Forth to the world those soldiers fare,  
To life, to cities, and to war !

And through the wood, another way,  
Faint bugle-notes from far are borne,  
Where hunters gather, staghounds bay,  
Round some fair forest-lodge at morn.  
Gay dames are there, in sylvan green ;  
Laughter and cries—those notes be-  
tween !

The banners flashing through the trees  
Make their blood dance and chain their  
eyes ;  
That bugle-music on the breeze  
Arrests them with a charm'd surprise.  
Banner by turns and bugle woo :  
*Ye shy recluses, follow too !*

O children, what do ye reply ?—  
“ Action and pleasure, will ye roam  
Through these secluded dells to cry  
And call us ?—but too late ye come !  
Too late for us your call ye blow,  
Whose bent was taken long ago.

“ Long since we pace this shadow'd nave ;  
We watch those yellow tapers shine,  
Emblems of hope over the grave,  
In the high altar's depth divine ;  
The organ carries to our ear  
Its accents of another sphere.

“ Fenced early in this cloistral round  
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,  
How should we grow in other ground ?  
How can we flower in foreign air ?  
—Pass, banners, pass, and bugles, cease ;  
And leave our desert to its peace ! ”

1855.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In *Fraser's Magazine*. First included in Arnold's *Poetical Works* in 1867.

## FROM SWITZERLAND

### ISOLATION. TO MARGUERITE

WE were apart ; yet, day by day,  
I bade my heart more constant be.  
I bade it keep the world away,  
And grow a home for only thee ;  
Nor fear'd but thy love likewise grew.  
Like mine, each day, more tried, more  
true.

The fault was grave ! I might have  
known,  
What far too soon, alas ! I learn'd—  
The heart can bind itself alone,  
And faith may oft be unreturn'd.  
Self-sway'd our feelings ebb and swell—  
Thou lov'st no more ;—Farewell ! Far  
well !

Farewell !—and thou, thou lonely heart  
Which never yet without remorse  
Even for a moment didst depart  
From thy remote and spheréd course  
To haunt the place where passions reign—  
Back to thy solitude again !

Back ! with the conscious thrill of shame  
Which Luna felt, that summer-night,  
Flash through her pure immortal frame.  
When she forsook the starry height  
To hang over Endymion's sleep  
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved  
How vain a thing is mortal love,  
Wandering in Heaven, far removed,  
But thou hast long had place to prove  
This truth—to prove, and make thine  
own :  
“ Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone.”

Or, if not quite alone, yet they  
Which touch thee are unmating things—  
Ocean and clouds and night and day ;  
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs ;  
And life, and others' joy and pain,  
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men—for they, at least,  
Have *dream'd* two human hearts might  
blend  
In one, and were through faith released  
From isolation without end  
Prolong'd ; nor knew, although not less  
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

1857.

## MARGUERITE—CONTINUED

the sea of life enisled,  
hoing straits between us thrown,  
the shoreless watery wild,  
tal millions live *alone*.  
nds feel the enclasping flow,  
en their endless bounds they  
now.

en the moon their hollows lights,  
y are swept by balms of spring,  
their glens on starry nights,  
htingales divinely sing;  
ely notes, from shore to shore,  
he sounds and channels pour—

n a longing like despair  
ir farthest caverns sent;  
ly once, they feel, we were  
a single continent!  
nd us spreads the watery plain—  
ht our margs meet again!

ler'd, that their longing's fire  
be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?  
nders vain their deep desire?—  
a God their severance ruled!  
le betwixt their shores to be  
lumb'd, salt, estranging sea.  
(1852.)<sup>1</sup> 1857.

## THYRSIS:

BY, to commemorate the author's  
friend,

HUGH CLOUGH, who died at  
Florence, 1861

anged is here each spot man  
makes or fills!  
two Hinkseys nothing keeps the  
same;  
village street its haunted man-  
sion lacks,  
from the sign is gone Sibylla's  
name,  
from the roofs the twisted chim-  
ney-stacks—

g alone, under the title: *To Marguerite*.  
are in the English language three  
ems so great that they eclipse and  
the elegiac poetry we know; all of  
ll of Greek. It is only because the  
rn is yet new to us that it can seem  
rash to say so. The *Thyrsis* of Mr.  
nakes a third with *Lycidas* and  
Thyrsis, like *Lycidas*, has a quiet  
r undertone which gives it something  
" (Swinburne.)

Are ye too changed, ye hills?  
See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men  
To-night from Oxford up your path-  
way strays!  
Here came I often, often, in old days—  
Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then.

Runs it not here, the track by Childs-  
worth Farm,  
Past the high wood, to where the elm-  
tree crowns  
The hill behind whose ridge the sun-  
set flames?  
The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley  
Downs,  
The Vale, the three lone weirs, the  
youthful Thames?—  
This winter-eve is warm,  
Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as  
spring,  
The tender purple spray on copse  
and briars!  
And that sweet city with her dream-  
ing spires,  
She needs not June for beauty's height-  
ening.

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-  
night!—  
Only, methinks, some loss of habit's  
power  
Befalls me wandering through this  
upland dim.  
Once pass'd I blindfold here, at any  
hour;  
Now seldom come I, since I came with  
him.  
That single elm-tree bright  
Against the west—I miss it! is it gone?  
We prized it dearly: while it stood,  
we said,  
Our friend, the Gipsy-Scholar, was  
not dead;  
While the tree lived, he in these fields  
lived on.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits  
here,  
But once I knew each field, each  
flower, each stick;  
And with the country-folk acquaint-  
ance made  
By barn in threshing-time, by new-  
built rick.  
Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we  
first assay'd.  
Ah me! this many a year  
My pipe is lost, my shepherd's holi-  
day!

Needs must I lose them, needs with  
heavy heart  
Into the world and wave of men de-  
part;  
But Thyrsis of his own will went away.  
It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest.  
He loved each simple joy the country  
yields,  
He loved his mates; but yet he could  
not keep,  
For that a shadow lour'd on the fields,  
Here with the shepherds and the  
silly sheep.  
Some life of men unblest  
He knew, which made him droop, and  
fill'd his head.  
He went: his piping took a troubled  
sound  
Of storms that rage outside our  
happy ground;  
He could not wait their passing, he is  
dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early  
June, [is o'er,  
When the year's primal burst of bloom  
Before the roses and the longest  
day— [floor  
When garden-walks and all the grassy  
With blossoms red and white of  
fallen May  
And chestnut-flowers are strewn—  
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting  
cry,  
From the wet field, through the next  
garden-trees,  
Come with the volleying rain and  
tossing breeze:  
*The bloom is gone, and with the bloom  
go I!*

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou  
go?  
Soon will the high Midsummer pomps  
come on,  
Soon will the musk carnations break  
and swell,  
Soon shall we have gold-dusted snap-  
dragon,  
Sweet-William with his homely  
cottage-smell,  
And stocks in fragrant blow;  
Roses that down the alleys shine afar,  
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,  
And groups under the dreaming  
garden trees,  
And the full moon, and the white  
evening-star.

He harkens not! light comes, he is  
flown!  
What matters it? next year he will  
return,  
And we shall have him in the  
sweet spring-days,  
With whitening hedges, and un-  
crumpling fern,  
And blue-bells trembling by the  
forest-ways,  
And scent of hay new-mown.  
But Thyrsis never more we swains  
shall see;  
See him come back, and cut a  
smoother reed,  
And blow a strain the world at last  
shall heed—  
For Time, not Corydon, hath conquer'd  
thee!

Alack, for Corydon no rival now!—  
But when Sicilian shepherds lost a  
mate,  
Some good survivor with his flute  
would go,  
Piping a ditty sad for Bion's fate;  
And cross the unpermitted ferry's  
flow,  
And relax Pluto's brow,  
And make leap up with joy the beauti-  
ous head  
Of Proserpine, among whose  
crowned hair  
Are flowers first open'd on Sicilian  
air,  
And flute his friend, like Orpheus,  
from the dead.

O easy access to the hearer's grace  
When Dorian shepherds sang to  
Proserpine!  
For she herself had trod Sicilian  
fields,  
She knew the Dorian water's gush  
divine,  
She knew each lily white which  
Enna yields,  
Each rose with blushing face;  
She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian  
strain,  
But ah, of our poor Thames she  
never heard! [stir'd;  
Her foot the Cumner cowslips never  
And we should tease her with our  
plaint in vain!

Well! wind-dispersed and vain the  
words will be, [hour  
Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its

In the old haunt, and find our tree-  
topp'd hill!

Who, if not I, for questing here hath  
power?

I know the wood which hides the  
daffodil,

I know the Fyfield tree,

I know what white, what purple fri-  
tillaries

The grassy harvest of the river-  
fields,

Above by Ensham, down by Sand-  
ford, yields,

And what sedged brooks are Thames's  
tributaries;

I know these slopes; who knows them  
if not I?—

But many a dingle on the loved hill-  
side,

With thorns once studded, old,  
white-blossom'd trees,

Where thick the cowslips grew, and  
far descried

High tower'd the spikes of purple  
orchises,

Hath since our day put by

The coronals of that forgotten time;

Down each green bank hath gone  
the ploughboy's team,

And only in the hidden brookside  
gleam

Primroses, orphans of the flowery  
prime.

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's  
door,

Above the locks, above the boating  
throng,

Unmoor'd our skiff when through  
the Wytham flats,

Red loosestrife and blond meadow-  
sweet among

And darting swallows and light  
water-gnats,

We track'd the shy Thames shore?

Where are the mowers, who, as the  
tiny swell

Of our boat passing heaved the river-  
grass,

Stood with suspended scythe to see  
us pass?—

They all are gone, and thou art gone  
as well!

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too  
the night

In ever-nearing circle weaves her  
shade.

I see her veil draw soft across the  
day,

I feel her slowly chilling breath invade

The cheek grown thin, the brown  
hair sprent with gray;

I feel her finger light

Laid pausefully upon life's headlong  
train:—

The foot less prompt to meet the  
morning dew,

The heart less bounding at emo-  
tion new,

And hope, once crush'd, less quick to  
spring again.

And long the way appears, which  
seem'd so short

To the less practised eye of sanguine  
youth;

And high the mountain-tops, in  
cloudy air,

The mountain-tops where is the  
throne of Truth,

Tops in life's morning-sun so bright  
and bare!

Unbreachable the fort

Of the long-batter'd world uplifts its  
wall;

And strange and vain the earthly  
turmoil grows,

And near and real the charm of thy  
repose,

And night as welcome as a friend  
would fall.

But hush! the upland hath a sudden  
loss

Of quiet!—Look, adown the dusk  
hill-side,

A troop of Oxford hunters going  
home,

As in old days, jovial and talking,  
ride!

From hunting with the Berkshire  
hounds they come,

Quick! let me fly, and cross

Into yon further field!—'Tis done,  
and see,

Back'd by the sunset, which doth  
glorify

The orange and pale violet evening-  
sky,

Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree!  
the Tree!

I take the omen! Eve lets down her  
veil,

The white fog creeps from bush to  
bush about,

The west unflushes, the high stars  
grow bright,  
And in the scatter'd farms the lights  
come out.

I cannot reach the signal-tree to-  
night,

Yet, happy omen, hail !

Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-  
vale

(For there thine earth-forgetting  
eyelids keep

The morningless and unawakening  
sleep

Under the flowery oleanders pale),

Hear it, O Thyriss, still our tree is  
there !—

Ah, vain ! These English fields, this  
upland dim,

These brambles pale with mist en-  
garlanded,

That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not  
for him ;

To a boon southern country he is  
fled,

And now in happier air,

Wandering with the great Mother's  
train divine

(And purer or more subtle soul than  
thee,

I trow, the mighty Mother doth not  
see)

Within a folding of the Apennine,

Thou hearest the immortal chants of  
old !—

Putting his sickle to the perilous  
grain

In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian  
king,

For thee the Lityrses-song again

Young Daphnis with his silver voice  
doth sing ;

Sings his Sicilian fold,

His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded  
eyes—

And how a call celestial round him  
rang,

And heavenward from the fountain-  
brink he sprang,

And all the marvel of the golden  
skies.

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest  
here

Sole in these fields ! yet will I not de-  
spair.

Despair I will not, while I yet de-  
sire

'Neath the mild canopy of English air  
That lonely tree against the western  
sky.

Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,  
Our Gipsy-Scholar haunts, outliving  
thee !

Fields where soft sheep from cages  
pull the hay,

Woods with anemones in flower till  
May,

Know him a wanderer still ; then why  
not me ?

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,  
Shy to illumine ; and I seek it too.

This does not come with houses or  
with gold,

With place, with honor, and a flatter-  
ing crew ;

'Tis not in the world's market  
bought and sold—

But the smooth-slipping weeks  
Drop by, and leave its seeker still

untired ;

Out of the heed of mortals he is  
gone,

He wends unfollow'd, he must house  
alone ;

Yet on he fares, by his own heart in-  
spired.

Thou too, O Thyriss, on like quest wast  
bound ;

Thou wanderest with me for a little  
hour !

Men gave thee nothing ; but this  
happy quest,

If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee  
power,

If men procured thee trouble, gave  
thee rest,

And this rude Cumner ground,  
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its

quiet fields,

Here cam'st thou in thy jocund  
youthful time,

Here was thine height of strength,  
thy golden prime !

And still the haunt beloved a virtue  
yields.

What though the music of thy rustic  
flute

Kept not for long its happy, country  
tone ;

Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy  
note

Of men contention-tost, of men who  
groan,

Which task'd thy pipe too sore, and  
tired thy throat—  
It fail'd, and thou wast mute!  
Yet hadst thou always visions of our  
light,  
And long with men of care thou  
couldst not stay.  
And soon thy foot resumed its wan-  
dering way,  
Left human haunt, and on alone till  
night.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits  
here!  
'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of  
yore,  
Thyrsis! in reach of sheep-bells is  
my home.  
—Then through the great town's harsh,  
heart-wearying roar,  
Let in thy voice a whisper often  
come,  
To chase fatigue and fear:  
*Why faintest thou! I wander'd till I died.  
Roam on! The light we sought is  
shining still.  
Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet  
crowns the hill,  
Our Scholar travels yet the loved hill-side.*  
1866.

## YOUTH AND CALM

'Tis death! and peace, indeed, is here,  
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.  
There's nothing can disarmle now  
The smoothness of that limpid brow.  
But is a calm like this, in truth,  
The crowning end of life and youth,  
And when this boon rewards the dead,  
Are all debts paid, has all been said?  
And is the heart of youth so light,  
Its step so firm, its eyes so bright,  
Because on its hot brow there blows  
A wind of promise and repose  
From the far grave, to which it goes;  
Because it hath the hope to come,  
One day, to harbor in the tomb?  
Ah no, the bliss youth dreams is one  
For daylight, for the cheerful sun,  
For feeling nerves and living breath—  
Youth dreams a bliss on this side death.  
It dreams a rest, if not more deep,  
More grateful than this marble sleep;  
It hears a voice within it tell:  
*Calm's not life's crown, though calm is  
well.*  
'T is all perhaps which man acquires,  
But 'tis not what our youth desires.  
(1852). 1867.

## AUSTERITY OF POETRY

THAT son of Italy who tried to blow,  
Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred  
song,  
In his light youth amid a festal throng  
Sate with his bride to see a public show.  
Fair was the bride, and on her front did  
glow  
Youth like a star; and what to youth  
belong—  
Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation  
strong.  
A prop gave way! crash fell a platform!  
lo,  
'Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death,  
she lay!  
Shuddering, they drew her garments  
off—and found  
A robe of sackcloth next the smooth,  
white skin.  
Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse!  
young, gay,  
Radiant, adorn'd outside; a hidden  
ground  
Of thought and of austerity within.  
1867.

## WORLDLY PLACE

*Even in a palace, life may be led well!*  
So spake the imperial sage, purest of men,  
Marcus Aurelius. But the stifling den  
Of common life, where, crowded up  
pell-mell.  
Our freedom for a little bread we sell,  
And drudge under some foolish master's  
ken  
Who rates us if we peer outside our  
pen—  
Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell?  
*Even in a palace!* On his truth sincere,  
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever  
came;  
And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame  
Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,  
I'll stop, and say: "There were no suc-  
cor here!  
The aids to noble life are all within."  
1867.

## EAST LONDON

'Twas August, and the fierce sun over-  
head  
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal  
Green,  
And the pale weaver, through his  
windows seen  
In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited.



I met a preacher there I knew, and said :  
"Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in  
this scene?"—

"Bravely!" said he; "for I of late have  
been

Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ,  
*the living bread.*"

O human soul! as long as thou canst so  
Set up a mark of everlasting light,  
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,  
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou  
roam—

Not with lost toil thou laborest through  
the night!

Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st  
indeed thy home. 1867.

#### WEST LONDON

CROUCH'D on the pavement, close by  
Belgrave Square,

A tramp I saw, ill, moody, and tongue-  
tied.

A babe was in her arms, and at her side  
A girl; their clothes were rags, their  
feet were bare.

Some laboring men, whose work lay  
somewhere there,

Pass'd opposite; she touch'd her girl,  
who hied

Across, and begg'd, and came back  
satisfied.

The rich she had let pass with frozen  
stare.

Thought I: "Above her state this spirit  
towers;

She will not ask of aliens, but of friends,  
Of sharers in a common human fate.

She turns from that cold succor, which  
attends

The unknown little from the unknow-  
ing great,

And points us to a better time than  
ours." 1867.

#### EAST AND WEST

In the bare midst of Anglesey they show  
Two springs which close by one another  
play;

And, "Thirteen hundred years ago,"  
they say,

"Two saints met often where those  
waters flow.

One came from Penmon westward, and  
a glow

Whiten'd his face from the sun's front-  
ing ray;

Eastward the other, from the dying day,

And he with unsunn'd face did always  
go."

*Scirio! the Bright, Kybi! the Dark!* man  
said.

The seër from the East was then in light,  
The seër from the West was then in  
shade.

Ah! now 'tis changed. In conquering  
sunshine bright

The man of the bold West now comes  
array'd;

He of the mystic East is touch'd with  
night. 1867.

#### THE BETTER PART

LONG fed on boundless hopes, O race of  
man,

How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler  
fare!

"Christ," some one says, "was human  
as we are;

No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin  
to scan;

We live no more, when we have done  
our span."

"Well, then, for Christ," thou answered,  
"who can care?

From sin, which Heaven records not,  
why forbear?

Live we like brutes our life without a  
plan!"

So answerest thou; but why not rather  
say:

"Hath man no second life?—*Pitch this  
one high!*

Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin  
to see?—

*More strictly, then, the inward judge  
obey!*

Was Christ a man like us? *Ah! let us try  
If we then, too, can be such men as he!*

1867.

#### IMMORTALITY

FOIL'D by our fellow-men, depress'd,  
outworn,

We leave the brutal world to take its  
way,

And, *Patience! in another life, we say.*  
*The world shall be thrust down, and we*

*up-borne.*

And will not, then, the immortal armies  
scorn

The world's poor, routed leavings? or  
will they,

Who fail'd under the heat of this life's  
day,

t the fervors of the heavenly  
 morn?  
 ! the energy of life may be  
 after the grave, but not begun;  
 who flagg'd not in the earthly  
 trife,  
 trength to strength advancing—  
 nly he,  
 al well-knit, and all his battles  
 ron,  
 , and that hardly, to eternal life.  
 1867.

## DOVER BEACH

is calm to-night,  
 e is full, the moon lies fair  
 he straits;—on the French coast  
 he light  
 and is gone; the cliffs of Eng-  
 and stand,  
 ering and vast, out in the tran-  
 uil bay.  
 o the window, sweet is the night-  
 ir!  
 rom the long line of spray  
 the sea meets the moon-blanch'd  
 and,  
 you hear the grating roar  
 les which the waves draw back,  
 nd fling,  
 r return, up the high strand.  
 and cease, and then again begin,  
 remulous cadence slow, and bring  
 rnal note of sadness in.

les long ago  
 it on the Ægean, and it brought  
 s mind the turbid ebb and flow  
 an misery: we  
 so in the sound a thought,  
 g it by this distant northern sea.

of Faith  
 ice, too, at the full, and round  
 arth's shore  
 e the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.  
 w I only hear  
 ancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
 ing, to the breath  
 night-wind, down the vast edges  
 rear  
 ked shingles of the world.  
 e, let us be true  
 another! for the world, which  
 eems  
 efore us like a land of dreams,  
 ous, so beautiful, so new,  
 ally neither joy, nor love, nor  
 ght,

Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for  
 pain;  
 And we are here as on a darkling plain  
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle  
 and flight,  
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.  
 1867.

## GROWING OLD

WHAT is it to grow old?  
 Is it to lose the glory of the form,  
 The lustre of the eye?  
 Is it for beauty to forego her wreath?  
 —Yes, but not this alone.

Is it to feel our strength—  
 Not our bloom only, but our strength—  
 decay?  
 Is it to feel each limb  
 Grow stiffer, every function less exact,  
 Each nerve more loosely strung?

Yes, this, and more; but not  
 Ah, 't is not what in youth we dream'd  
 't would be!  
 'T is not to have our life  
 Mellow'd and soften'd as with sunset-  
 glow,  
 A golden day's decline.

'T is not to see the world  
 As from a height, with rapt prophetic  
 eyes,  
 And heart profoundly stirr'd;  
 And weep, and feel the fulness of the  
 past,  
 The years that are no more.

It is to spend long days  
 And not once feel that we were ever  
 young;  
 It is to add, immured  
 In the hot prison of the present, month  
 To month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,  
 And feel but half, and feebly, what we  
 feel.  
 Deep in our hidden heart  
 Festers the dull remembrance of a  
 change,  
 But no emotion—none.

It is—last stage of all—  
 When we are frozen up within, and quite  
 The phantom of ourselves,  
 To hear the world applaud the hollow  
 ghost  
 Which blamed the living man. 1867.



## PIS-ALLER

"MAN is blind because of sin,  
Revelation makes him sure ;  
Without that, who looks within,  
Looks in vain, for all 's obscure."

Nay, look closer into man !  
Tell me, can you find indeed  
Nothing sure, no moral plan  
Clear prescribed, without your creed ?

"No, I nothing can perceive !  
Without that, all 's dark for men.  
That, or nothing, I believe."—  
For God's sake, believe it then !

1867.

## THE LAST WORD

CREEP into thy narrow bed,  
Creep, and let no more be said !  
Vain thy onset ! all stands fast,  
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease !  
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.  
Let them have it how they will !  
Thou art tired ; best be still.

They out-talk'd thee, hiss'd thee, tore  
thee ?  
Better men fared thus before thee ;  
Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,  
Hotly charged—and sank at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb !  
Let the victors, when they come,  
When the forts of folly fall,  
Find thy body by the wall !

1867.

## BACCHANALIA ;

OR,

## THE NEW AGE

I

THE evening comes, the fields are still.  
The tinkle of the thirsty rill,  
Unheard all day, ascends again ;  
Deserted is the half-mown plain,  
Silent the swaths ! the ringing wain,  
The mower's cry, the dog's alarms,  
All housed within the sleeping farms !  
The business of the day is done,  
The last-left haymaker is gone.  
And from the thyme upon the height,  
And from the elder-blossom white

And pale dog-roses in the hedge,  
And from the mint-plant in the sedge,  
In puffs of balm the night-air blows  
The perfume which the day foregoes.  
And on the pure horizon far,  
See, pulsing with the first-born star,  
The liquid sky above the hill !  
The evening comes, the fields are still.

Loitering and leaping,  
With saunter, with bounds—  
Flickering and circling  
In files and in rounds—  
Gaily their pine-staff green  
Tossing in air.  
Loose o'er their shoulders white  
Showering their hair—  
See ! the wild Mænads  
Break from the wood,  
Youth and Iacchus  
Maddening their blood.  
See ! through the quiet land  
Rioting they pass—  
Fling the fresh heaps about,  
Trample the grass.  
Tear from the rifled hedge  
Garlands, their prize ;  
Fill with their sports the field,  
Fill with their cries.

Shepherd, what ails thee, then ?  
Shepherd, why mute ?  
Forth with thy joyous song !  
Forth with thy flute !  
Tempt not the revel blithe ?  
Lure not their cries ?  
Glow not their shoulders smooth ?  
Melt not their eyes ?  
Is not, on cheeks like those,  
Lovely the flush ?  
—Ah, so the quiet was !  
So was the hush !

II

The epoch ends, the world is still.  
The age has talk'd and work'd its fill—  
The famous orators have shone,  
The famous poets sung and gone,  
The famous men of war have fought,  
The famous speculators thought,  
The famous players, sculptors, wrought,  
The famous painters fill'd their wall,  
The famous critics judged it all.  
The combatants are parted now—  
Uphung the spear, unbent the bow.  
The puissant crown'd, the weak laid low,  
And in the after-silence sweet,  
Now strifes are hush'd, our ears doth  
meet,

Ascending pure, the bell-like fame  
Of this or that down-trodden name,  
Delicate spirits, push'd away  
In the hot press of the noon-day,  
And o'er the plain, where the dead age  
Did its now silent warfare wage—  
O'er that wide plain, now wrapt in  
gloom,  
Where many a splendor finds its tomb,  
Many spent fames and fallen might—  
The one or two immortal lights  
Rise slowly up into the sky  
To shine there everlastingly,  
Like stars over the bounding hill.  
The epoch ends, the world is still.

Thundering and bursting  
In torrents, in waves—  
Carolling and shouting  
Over tombs, amid graves—  
See! on the cumber'd plain  
Clearing a stage,  
Scattering the past about,  
Comes the new age.  
Bards make new poems,  
Thinkers new schools,  
Statesmen new systems,  
Critics new rules.  
All things begin again;  
Life is their prize;  
Earth with their deeds they fill,  
Fill with their cries.

Poet, what ails thee, then?  
Say, why so mute?  
Forth with thy praising voice!  
Forth with thy flute!  
Loiterer! why sittest thou  
Sunk in thy dream?  
Tempt not the bright new age?  
Shines not its stream?  
Look, ah, what genius,  
Art, science, wit!  
Soldiers like Caesar,  
Statesmen like Pitt!  
Sculptors like Phidias,  
Raphaels in shoals,  
Poets like Shakespeare—  
Beautiful souls!  
See, on their glowing cheeks  
Heavenly the flush!  
—Ah, so the silence was!  
So was the hush!

The world but feels the present's spell,  
The poet feels the past as well;  
Whatever men have done, might do,  
Whatever thought, might think it too.  
1867.

## PALLADIUM

SET where the upper streams, of Simois  
flow  
Was the Palladium, high 'mid rock and  
wood;  
And Hector was in Ilium, far below,  
And fought, and saw it not—but there  
it stood!

It stood, and sun and moonshine rain'd  
their light  
On the pure columns of its glen-built  
hall,  
Backward and forward roll'd the waves  
of fight  
Round Troy—but while this stood, Troy  
could not fall.

So, in its lovely moonlight, lives the  
soul,  
Mountains surround it and sweet virgin  
air;  
Cold plashing, past it, crystal waters  
roll;  
We visit it by moments, ah, too rare!

We shall renew the battle in the plain  
To-morrow; red with blood will Xanthus  
be;  
Hector and Ajax will be there again,  
Helen will come upon the wall to see.

Then we shall rust in shade, or shine in  
strife,  
And fluctuate 'twixt blind hopes and  
blind despairs,  
And fancy that we put forth all our life,  
And never know how with the soul it  
fares.

Still doth the soul, from its lone fastness  
high,  
Upon our life a ruling effluence send.  
And when it fails, fight as we will, we  
die;  
And while it lasts, we cannot wholly end.  
1867.

## A WISH

I ASK not that my bed of death  
From bands of greedy heirs be free;  
For these besiege the latest breath  
Of fortune's favor'd sons, not me.

I ask not each kind soul to keep  
Tearless, when of my death he hears.  
Let those who will, if any, weep!

There are worse plagues on earth than  
tears.

I ask but that my death may find  
The Freedom to my life denied;  
Ask but the folly of mankind  
Then, then at last, to quit my side.

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,  
The friends who come, and gape, and go;  
The ceremonious air of gloom—  
All, which makes death a hideous show!

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,  
Some doctor full of phrase and fame,  
To shake his sapient head, and give  
The ill he cannot cure a name.

Nor fetch, to take the accustom'd toll  
Of the poor sinner bound for death,  
His brother-doctor of the soul,  
To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things—  
That undiscover'd mystery  
Which one who feels death's winnowing  
wings  
Must needs read clearer, sure, than he!

Bring none of these; but let me be,  
While all around in silence lies,  
Moved to the window near, and see  
Once more, before my dying eyes,

Bathed in the sacred dews of morn  
The wide aerial landscape spread—  
The world which was ere I was born,  
The world which lasts when I am dead;

Which never was the friend of *one*,  
Nor promised love it could not give,  
But lit for all its generous sun,  
And lived itself, and made us live.

There let me gaze, till I become  
In soul, with what I gaze on, wed!  
To feel the universe my home;  
To have before my mind—instead

Of the sick room, the mortal strife,  
The turmoil for a little breath—  
The pure eternal course of life,  
Not human combatings with death!

Thus feeling, gazing, might I grow  
Composed, refresh'd, ennobled, clear;  
Then willing let my spirit go  
To work or wait elsewhere or here!

## RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER 1857

COLDLY, sadly descends  
The autumn-evening. The field  
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts  
Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,  
Fade into dimness apace,  
Silent;—hardly a shout  
From a few boys late at their play!  
The lights come out in the street,  
In the school-room windows;—but cold  
Solemn, unlighted, austere,  
Through the gathering darkness, arise  
The chapel-walls, in whose bound  
Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom  
Of the autumn evening. But ah!  
That word, *gloom*, to my mind  
Brings thee back, in the light  
Of thy radiant vigor, again;  
In the gloom of November we pass'd  
Days not dark at thy side;  
Seasons impair'd not the ray  
Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear,  
Such thou wast! and I stand  
In the autumn evening and think  
Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round  
Since thou arosest to tread,  
In the summer-morning, the road  
Of death, at a call unforeseen,  
Sudden. For fifteen years,  
We who till then in thy shade  
Rest'd as under the boughs  
Of a mighty oak, have endured  
Sunshine and rain as we might,  
Bare, unshaded, alone,  
Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore  
Tarriest thou now? For that force,  
Surely, has not been left vain!  
Somewhere, surely, afar,  
In the sounding labor-house vast  
Of being, is practised that strength,  
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,  
Conscious or not of the past,  
Still thou performest the word  
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—  
Prompt, unwearied, as here!  
Still thou upraiest with zeal  
The humble good from the ground,  
Sternly represses the bad!  
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse

with half-open eyes  
border-land dim  
and virtue ; reviv'st,  
!—this was thy work ;  
thy life upon earth.

the course of the life  
men on the earth ?—  
eddy about  
there—eat and drink,  
and love and hate,  
and squander, are raised  
hurl'd in the dust,  
blindly, achieving  
and then they die—  
and no one asks  
what they have been,  
he asks what waves,  
onlit solitudes mild  
dimost Ocean, have swell'd,  
or a moment, and gone.

are some, whom a thirst  
inquenchable, fires,  
the crowd to be spent,  
but aim to go round  
y of purposeless dust,  
meaning and vain.  
some of us strive  
out action to die  
but something to snatch  
oblivion, nor all  
levouring grave !  
ave chosen our path—  
clear-purposed goal,  
dvance !—but it leads  
deep journey, through sunk  
er mountains in snow.  
with friends, we set forth—  
the height, comes the storm.  
crashes from rock  
the cataracts reply,  
gs dazzle our eyes.  
orrents have breach'd  
t, the stream-bed descends  
ice where the wayfarer once.  
his footstep—the spray  
its borders ! aloft  
en snow-beds dislodge  
ging ruin ; alas,  
made in our train !  
who set forth at our side,  
e lost in the storm.  
only are left !  
wning foreheads, with lips  
ompress'd, we strain on,  
at nightfall at last  
the end of our way,  
nely inn 'mid the rocks ;

Where the gaunt and taciturn host  
Stands on the threshold, the wind  
Shaking his thin white hairs—  
Holds his lantern to scan  
Our storm-beat figures, and asks :  
Whom in our party we bring?  
Whom we have left in the snow ?

Sadly we answer : We bring  
Only ourselves ! we lost  
Sight of the rest in the storm.  
Hardly ourselves we fought through,  
Stripp'd, without friends, as we are.  
Friends, companions, and train.  
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*  
Be saved, my father ! *alone*  
Conquer and come to thy goal,  
Leaving the rest in the wild.  
We were weary, and we  
Fearful, and we in our march  
Fain to drop down and to die.  
Still thou turnedst, and still  
Beckonedst the trembler, and still  
Gavest the weary thy hand.

If, in the paths of the world,  
Stones might have wounded thy feet,  
Toil or dejection have tried  
Thy spirit, of that we saw  
Nothing—to us thou wast still  
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm !  
Therefore to thee it was given  
Many to save with thyself ;  
And, at the end of thy day,  
O faithful shepherd ! to come,  
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.  
And through thee I believe  
In the noble and great who are gone ;  
Pure souls honor'd and blest  
By former ages, who else—  
Such, so soulless, so poor,  
Is the race of men whom I see—  
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,  
Seem'd but a cry of desire.  
Yes ! I believe that there lived  
Others like thee in the past,  
Not like the men of the crowd  
Who all round me to-day  
Bluster or cringe, and make life  
Hideous, and arid, and vile ;  
But souls temper'd with fire,  
Fervent, heroic, and good,  
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God !—or sons  
Shall I not call you ? because  
Not as servants ye knew  
Your Father's innermost mind,

His, who unwillingly sees  
One of his little ones lost—  
Yours is the praise, if mankind  
Hath not as yet in its march  
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world  
Marches the host of mankind,  
A feeble, wavering line.  
Where are they tending?—A God  
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal.  
Ah, but the way is so long!  
Years they have been in the wild!  
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,  
Rising all round, overawe;  
Factions divide them, their host  
Threatens to break, to dissolve.  
—Ah, keep, keep them combined!  
Else, of the myriads who fill  
That army, not one shall arrive;  
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks  
Stagger for ever in vain.  
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need  
Of your fainting, dispirited race,  
Ye, like angels, appear,  
Radiant with ardor divine!  
Beacons of hope, ye appear!  
Languor is not in your heart,  
Weakness is not in your word,  
Weariness not on your brow.  
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,  
Panic, despair, flee away.  
Ye move through the ranks, recall  
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,  
Praise, re-inspire the brave!  
Order, courage, return;  
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,  
Follow your steps as ye go.  
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,  
Strengthen the wavering line,  
Stablish, continue our march.  
On, to the bound of the waste,  
On, to the City of God. 1867.

### HEINE

(FROM HEINE'S GRAVE)

THE Spirit of the world,  
Beholding the absurdity of men—  
Their vaunts, their feats—let a sardonic  
smile,  
For one short moment, wander o'er his  
lips.  
That smile was Heine!—for its earthly  
hour  
The strange guest sparkled: now 'tis  
pass'd away.

That was Heine! and we,  
Myriads who live, who have lived,  
What are we all, but a mood,  
A single mood, of the life  
Of the Spirit in whom we exist,  
Who alone is all things in one?  
Spirit, who fillest us all!  
Spirit, who utterest in each  
New-coming son of mankind  
Such of thy thoughts as thou wilt!  
O thou, one of whose moods,  
Bitter and strange, was the life  
Of Heine—his strange, alas,  
His bitter life!—may a life  
Other and milder be mine!  
May'st thou a mood more serene,  
Happier, have utter'd in mine!  
May'st thou the rapture of peace  
Deep have embreathed at its core;  
Made it a ray of thy thought,  
Made it a beat of thy joy! 1867.

### OBERMANN ONCE MORE

*Savez-vous quelque bien qui console du regret  
d'un monde?* OBERMANN.

GLION?—Ah, twenty years, it cuts!  
All meaning from a name!  
White houses prank where once were  
huts.  
Glion, but not the same!

And yet I know not! All unchanged  
The turf, the pines, the sky!  
The hills in their old order ranged;  
The lake, with Chillon by!

And, 'neath those chestnut-trees, where  
stiff

And stony mounts the way,  
The crackling husk-heaps burn, as if  
I left them yesterday!

Across the valley, on that slope,  
The huts of Avant shine!  
Its pines, under their branches, ope  
Ways for the pasturing kine.

Full-foaming milk-pails, Alpine fare,  
Sweet heaps of fresh-cut grass,  
Invite to rest the traveller there  
Before he climb the pass—

<sup>1</sup> Probably all who know the Vevey end of the Lake of Geneva, will recollect Glion, the mountain-village above the castle of Chillon. Glion now has hotels, *pensions*, and villas; but twenty years ago it was hardly more than the huts of Avant opposite to it,—huts through which goes that beautiful path over the Col de Jaman, followed by so many foot-travellers on their way from Vevey to the Simmenthal and Thun.

(Arnold).



The gentian-flower'd pass, its crown  
With yellow spires aflame :  
Whence drops the path to Allière down,  
And walls where Byron came.<sup>1</sup>

By their green river, who doth change  
His birth-name just below :  
Orchard, and croft, and full-stored  
grange  
Nursed by his pastoral flow.

But stop!—to fetch back thoughts that  
stray  
Beyond this gracious bound.  
The cone of Jaman, pale and gray,  
See, in the blue profound !

Ah, Jaman ! delicately tall  
Above his sun-warm'd firs—  
What thoughts to me his rocks recall,  
What memories he stirs !

And who but thou must be, in truth,  
Obermann ! with me here ?  
Thou master of my wandering youth,  
But left this many a year !

Yes, I forget the world's work wrought,  
Its warfare waged with pain ;  
An eremite with thee, in thought  
Once more I slip my chain,

And to thy mountain-chalet come,  
And lie beside its door,  
And hear the wild bee's Alpine hum,  
And thy sad, tranquil lore !

Again I feel the words inspire  
Their mournful calm ; serene,  
Yet tinged with infinite desire  
For all that *might* have been—

The harmony from which man swerved  
Made his life's rule once more !  
The universal order served,  
Earth happier than before !

—While thus I mused, night gently ran  
Down over hill and wood.  
Then, still and sudden, Obermann  
On the grass near me stood.

Those pensive features well I knew,  
On my mind, years before,  
Imaged so oft ! imaged so true !  
—A shepherd's garb he wore,

<sup>1</sup> Montbovon. See Byron's *Journal*, in his *Works*, vol. III. p. 258. The river Saane becomes the Sarine below Montbovon. (*Arnold*).

A mountain-flower was in his hand,  
A book was in his breast.  
Bent on my face, with gaze which  
scann'd  
My soul, his eyes did rest.

"And is it thou," he cried, "so long  
Held by the world which we  
Loved not, who turnest from the throng  
Back to thy youth and me ?

"And from thy world, with heart op-  
prest,  
Chooseth thou *now* to turn ?—  
Ah me ! we anchorites read things best,  
Clearest their course discern !

"Thou fledst me when the ungenial  
earth,  
Man's work-place, lay in gloom.  
Return'st thou in her hour of birth,  
Of hopes and hearts in bloom ?

"Perceiv'st thou not the change of day ?  
Ah ! Carry back thy ken,  
What, some two thousand years ! Sur-  
vey  
The world as it was then !

"Like ours it look'd in outward air.  
Its head was clear and true,  
Sumptuous its clothing, rich its fare,  
No pause its action knew ;

"Stout was its arm, each thew and bone  
Seem'd puissant and alive—  
But, ah ! its heart, its heart was stone,  
And so it could not thrive !

"On that hard Pagan world disgust  
And secret loathing fell.  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell.

"In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,  
The Roman noble lay :  
He drove abroad, in furious guise,  
Along the Appian way.

"He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,  
And crown'd his hair with flowers—  
No easier nor no quicker pass'd  
The impracticable hours.

"The brooding East with awe beheld  
Her impious younger world.  
The Roman tempest swell'd and swell'd,  
And on her head was hurl'd.

"The East bow'd low before the blast  
In patient, deep disdain;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in thought again.

"So well she mused, a morning broke  
Across her spirit gray;  
A conquering, new-born joy awoke,  
And fill'd her life with day.

"'Poor world,' she cried, 'so deep accursed,  
That runn'st from pole to pole  
To seek a draught to slake thy thirst—  
Go, seek it in thy soul!'

"She heard it, the victorious West,  
In crown and sword array'd!  
She felt the void which mined her breast,  
She shiver'd and obey'd.

"She veil'd her eagles, snapp'd her sword,  
And laid her sceptre down;  
Her stately purple she abhor'd,  
And her imperial crown.

"She broke her flutes, she stopp'd her sports,  
Her artists could not please;  
She tore her books, she shut her courts,  
She fled her palaces;

"Lust of the eye and pride of life  
She left it all behind,  
And hurried, torn with inward strife,  
The wilderness to find.

"Tears wash'd the trouble from her face!  
She changed into a child!  
'Mid weeds and wrecks she stood—a place  
Of ruin—but she smiled!

"Oh, had I lived in that great day,  
How had its glory new  
Fill'd earth and heaven, and caught away  
My ravish'd spirit too!

"No thoughts that to the world belong  
Had stood against the wave  
Of love which set so deep and strong  
From Christ's then open grave.

"No cloister-floor of humid stone  
Had been too cold for me.  
For me no Eastern desert lone  
Had been too far to flee.

"No lonely life had pass'd too slow,  
When I could hourly scan  
Upon his Cross, with head sunk low,  
That nail'd, thorn-crowned Man!

"Could see the Mother with her Child  
Whose tender winning arts  
Have to his little arms beguiled  
So many wounded hearts!

"And centuries came and ran their course,  
And unspent all that time  
Still, still went forth that Child's dear force,  
And still was at its prime.

"Ay, ages long endured his span  
Of life—'tis true received—  
That gracious Child, that thorn-crown'd Man!  
—He lived while we believed.

"While we believed, on earth he went,  
And open stood his grave.  
Men call'd from chamber, church, and tent;  
And Christ was by to save.

"Now he is dead! Far hence he lies  
In the lorn Syrian town;  
And on his grave, with shining eyes,  
The Syrian stars look down.

"In vain men still, with hoping new,  
Regard his death-place dumb,  
And say the stone is not yet to,  
And wait for words to come.

"Ah, o'er that silent sacred land,  
Of sun, and arid stone,  
And crumbling wall, and sultry sand,  
Sounds now one word alone!

"Undup'd of fancy, henceforth man  
Must labor!—must resign  
His all too human creeds and scan  
Simply the way divine!

"But slow that tide of common thought,  
Which bathed our life, retired;  
Slow, slow the old world wore to nought,  
And pulse by pulse expired.

"Its frame yet stood without a breach  
When blood and warmth were fled;  
And still it spake its wonted speech—  
But every word was dead.

" And oh, we cried, that on this corse  
Might fall a freshening storm !  
Rive its dry bones, and with new force  
A new-sprung world inform !

" —Down came the storm ! O'er France  
it pass'd  
In sheets of scathing fire ;  
All Europe felt that fiery blast,  
And shook as it rush'd by her.

" Down came the storm ! In ruins fell  
The worn-out world we knew.  
—It pass'd, that elemental swell !  
Again appear'd the blue ;

" The sun shone in the new-wash'd sky,  
And what from heaven saw he ?  
Blocks of the past, like icebergs high,  
Float on a rolling sea !

" Upon them plies the race of man  
All it before endeavor'd ;  
' Ye live,' I cried, ' ye work and plan,  
And know not ye are sever'd !

" " Poor fragments of a broken world  
Whereon men pitch their tent !  
Why were ye too to death not hurl'd  
When your world's day was spent ?

" " That glow of central fire is done  
Which with its fusing flame  
Knit all your parts, and kept you one—  
But ye, ye are the same !

" " The past, its mask of union on,  
Had ceased to live and thrive.  
The past, its mask of union gone,  
Say, is it more alive ?

" " Your creeds are dead, your rites are  
dead,  
Your social order too !  
Where tarries he, the Power who said :  
*See. I make all things new ?*

" " The millions suffer still, and grieve,  
And what can helpers heal  
With old-world cures men half believe  
For woes they wholly feel ?

" " And yet men have such need of joy !  
But joy whose grounds are true ;  
And joy that should all hearts employ  
As when the past was new.

" " Ah, not the emotion of that past,  
Its common hope, were vain !  
Some new such hope must dawn at last,  
Or man must toss in pain.

" " But now the old is out of date,  
The new is not yet born,  
And who can be *alone* elate,  
While the world lies forlorn ?

" Then to the wilderness I fled.—  
There among Alpine snows  
And pastoral huts I hid my head,  
And sought and found repose.

" It was not yet the appointed hour.  
Sad, patient, and resign'd,  
I watch'd the crocus fade and flower,  
I felt the sun and wind.

" The day I lived in was not mine,  
Man gets no second day.  
In dreams I saw the future shine—  
But ah ! I could not stay !

" Action I had not, followers, fame ;  
I pass'd obscure, alone.  
The after-world forgets my name,  
Nor do I wish it known.

" Composed to bear, I lived and died,  
And knew my life was vain.  
With fate I murmur not, nor chide.  
At Sèvres by the Seine

" (If Paris that brief flight allow)  
My humble tomb explore !  
It bears : *Eternity, be thou  
My refuge !* and no more.

" But thou, whom fellowship of mood  
Did make from haunts of strife  
Come to my mountain-solitude,  
And learn my frustrate life ;

" O thou, who, ere thy flying span  
Was past of cheerful youth,  
Didst find the solitary man  
And love his cheerless truth—

" Despair not thou as I despair'd,  
Nor be cold gloom thy prison !  
Forward the gracious hours have fared,  
And see ! the sun is risen !

" He breaks the winter of the past ;  
A green, new earth appears.  
Millions, whose life in ice lay fast,  
Have thoughts, and smiles, and tears.

" What though there still need effort,  
strife ?  
Though much be still unwon ?  
Yet warm it mounts, the hour of life !  
Death's frozen hour is done !



"The world's great order dawns in sheen,

After long darkness rude,  
Divinelier imaged, clearer seen,  
With happier zeal pursued.

"With hope extinct and brow composed  
I mark'd the present die;  
Its term of life was nearly closed,  
Yet it had more than I.

"But thou, though to the world's new hour  
Thou come with aspect marr'd,  
Shorn of the joy, the bloom, the power  
Which best befits its bard—

"Though more than half thy years be past,  
And spent thy youthful prime;  
Though, round thy firmer manhood cast  
Hang weeds of our sad time

"Whereof thy youth felt all the spell,  
And traversed all the shade—  
Though late, though dimm'd, though weak, yet tell  
Hope to a world new-made!

"Help it to fill that deep desire,  
The want which rack'd our brain,  
Consumed our heart with thirst like fire,  
Immedicable pain;

"Which to the wilderness drove out  
Our life, to Alpine snow,

And palsied all our word with doubt,  
And all our work with woe—

"What still of strength is left, employ,  
This end to help attain:  
*One common wave of thought and joy  
Lifting mankind again!"*

—The vision ended. I awoke  
As out of sleep, and no  
Voice moved;—only the torrent broke  
The silence, far below.

Soft darkness on the turf did lie.  
Solemn, o'er hut and wood,  
In the yet star-sown nightly sky,  
The peak of Jaman stood.

Still in my soul the voice I heard  
Of Obermann!—away  
I turn'd; by some vague impulse stirr'd,  
Along the rocks of Naye

Past Sonchaud's piny flanks I gaze  
And the blanch'd summit bare  
Of Malatrait, to where in haze  
The Valais opens fair,

And the domed Velan, with his snows,  
Behind the upcrowding hills,  
Doth all the heavenly opening close  
Which the Rhone's murmur fills;—

And glorious there, without a sound,  
Across the glimmering lake,  
High in the Valais-depth profound,  
I saw the morning break. 1867.

# ROSSETTI

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## ROSSETTI

### MY SISTER'S SLEEP

SHE fell asleep on Christmas Eve :  
At length the long-ungranted shade  
Of weary eyelids overweigh'd  
The pain nought else might yet relieve.

Our mother, who had leaned all day  
Over the bed from chime to chime,  
Then raised herself for the first time,  
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread  
With work to finish. For the glare  
Made by her candle, she had care  
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a cold moon up,  
Of winter radiance sheer and thin ;  
The hollow halo it was in  
Was like an icy crystal cup.

Through the small room, with subtle  
sound  
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove  
And reddened. In its dim alcove  
The mirror shed a clearness round.

I had been sitting up some nights,  
And my tired mind felt weak and  
blank ;  
Like a sharp strengthening wine it  
drank  
The stillness and the broken lights.

Twelve struck. That sound, by dwindle  
years  
Heard in each hour, crept off ; and  
then  
The ruffled silence spread again,  
Like water that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat :  
Her needles, as she laid them down,  
Met lightly, and her silken gown  
Settled : no other noise than that.

"Glory unto the Newly Born !"  
So, as said angels, she did say ;

Because we were in Christmas Day,  
Though it would still be long till morn.

Just then in the room over us  
There was a pushing back of chairs,  
As some who had sat unawares  
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

With anxious softly-stepping haste  
Our mother went where Margaret lay,  
Fearing the sounds o'erhead—should  
they  
Have broken her long watched-for rest !

She stooped an instant, calm, and  
turned ;  
But suddenly turned back again :  
And all her features seemed in pain  
With woe, and her eyes gazed and  
yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face,  
And held my breath, and spoke no  
word :  
There was none spoken ; but I heard  
The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept :  
And both my arms fell, and I said,  
"God knows I knew that she was  
dead."  
And there, all white, my sister slept.

Then kneeling, upon Christmas morn  
A little after twelve o'clock  
We said, ere the first quarter struck,  
"Christ's blessing on the newly born!"  
1847. 1850.

### THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out  
From the gold bar of Heaven ;  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of waters stilled at even ;  
She had three lilies in her hand,  
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
No wrought flowers did adorn,

But a white rose of Mary's gift,  
For service meetly worn;  
Her hair that lay along her back  
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day  
One of God's choristers;  
The wonder was not yet quite gone  
From that still look of hers;  
Albeit, to them she left, her day  
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.  
    . . . Yet now, and in this place,  
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair  
Fell all about my face. . . .  
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.  
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house  
That she was standing on;  
By God built over the sheer depth  
The which is Space begun;  
So high, that looking downward thence  
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood  
Of ether, as a bridge.  
Beneath the tides of day and night  
With flame and darkness ridge  
The void, as low as where this earth  
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met  
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,  
Spoke evermore among themselves  
Their heart-remembered names;  
And the souls mounting up to God  
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped  
Out of the circling charm;  
Until her bosom must have made  
The bar she leaned on warm,  
And the lilies lay as if asleep  
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw  
Time like a pulse shake fierce  
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still  
    strove  
Within the gulf to pierce  
Its path: and now she spoke as when  
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon  
Was like a little feather  
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now  
She spoke through the still weather.  
Her voice was like the voice the stars  
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's  
    song,  
Strove not her accents there,  
Fain to be harkened? When those bells  
Possessed the mid-day air,  
Strove not her steps to reach my side  
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,  
For he will come," she said.  
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on  
    earth,  
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?  
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?  
And shall I feel afraid?"

"When round his head the aureole  
    clings,  
And he is clothed in white,  
I'll take his hand and go with him  
To the deep wells of light;  
As unto a stream we will step down,  
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,  
Occult, withheld, untrod.  
Whose lamps are stirred continually  
With prayer sent up to God;  
And see our old prayers, granted, melt  
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of  
That living mystic tree  
Within whose secret growth the Dove  
Is sometimes felt to be,  
While every leaf that His plumes touch  
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,  
I myself, lying so,  
The songs I sing here; which his voice  
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,  
And find some knowledge at each pause,  
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!  
Yea, one wast thou with me  
That once of old. But shall God lift  
To endless unity  
The soul whose likeness with thy soul  
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the  
    groves  
Where the lady Mary is,  
With her five handmaidens, whose  
    names  
Are five sweet symphonies,  
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks  
And foreheads garlanded ;  
Into the fine cloth white like flame  
Weaving the golden thread,  
To fashion the birth-robcs for them  
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb :  
Then will I lay my cheek  
To his, and tell about our love,  
Not once abashed or weak :  
And the dear Mother will approve  
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
To Him round whom all souls  
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered  
heads  
Bowed with their aureoles :  
And angels meeting us shall sing  
To their oitherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
Thus much for him and me :—  
Only to live as once on earth  
With Love, only to be,  
As then awhile, for ever now.  
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,  
Less sad of speech than mild,—  
"All this is when he comes." She  
ceased.

The light thrilled towards her, fill'd  
With angels in strong level flight.  
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path  
Was vague in distant spheres :  
And then she cast her arms along  
The golden barriers,  
And laid her face between her hands,  
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

1847. 1850.

#### AUTUMN SONG

Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf  
How the heart feels a languid grief  
Laid on it for a covering ;  
And how sleep seems a goodly thing  
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf ?

And how the swift beat of the brain  
Falters because it is in vain.  
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf  
Knowest thou not ? and how the chief  
Of joys seems—not to suffer pain ?

Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf  
How the soul feels like a dried sheaf  
Bound up at length for harvesting,  
And how death seems a comely thing  
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf ?  
1884.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE PORTRAIT

THIS is her picture as she was :  
It seems a thing to wonder on,  
As though mine image in the glass  
Should tarry when myself am gone.  
I gaze until she seems to stir,—  
Until mine eyes almost avert  
That now, even now, the sweet lips  
part  
To breathe the words of the sweet  
heart :—  
And yet the earth is over her.

Alas ! even such the thin-drawn ray  
That makes the prison-depths more  
rude,—  
The drip of water night and day  
Giving a tongue to solitude.  
Yet only this, of love's whole prize,  
Remains ; save what in mournful guise  
Takes counsel with my soul alone,—  
Save what is secret and unknown,  
Below the earth, above the skies.

In painting her I shrined her face  
'Mid mystic trees, where light falls in  
Hardly at all ; a covert place  
Where you might think to find a din  
Of doubtful talk, and a live flame  
Wandering, and many a shape whose  
name  
Not itself knoweth, and old dew,  
And your own footsteps meeting you,  
And all things going as they came.

A deep dim wood : and there she stands  
As in that wood that day : for so  
Was the still movement of her hands  
And such the pure line's gracious  
flow.

And passing fair the type must seem,  
Unknown the presence and the dream.  
'T is she : though of herself, alas !  
Less than her shadow on the grass  
Or than her image in the stream.

That day we met there, I and she  
One with the other all alone ;  
And we were blithe ; yet memory

<sup>1</sup> W. M. Rossetti classes this among the earliest poems, in date of writing. It was published as a song in 1884, and in the *Poetical Works*, 1889.

Saddens those hours, as when the  
moon  
Looks upon daylight. And with her  
I stooped to drink the spring-water,  
Athirst where other waters sprang;  
And where the echo is, she sang,—  
My soul another echo there.

But when that hour my soul won  
strength  
For words whose silence wastes and  
kills,  
Dull raindrops smote us, and at length  
Thundered the heat within the hills.  
That eve I spoke those words again  
Beside the pelted window-pane;  
And there she harkened what I said,  
With under-glances that surveyed  
The empty pastures blind with rain.

Next day the memories of these things,  
Like leaves through which a bird has  
flown,  
Still vibrated with Love's warm wings;  
Till I must make them all my own  
And paint this picture. So, 'twixt ease  
Of talk and sweet long silences,  
She stood among the plants in bloom  
At windows of a summer room,  
To feign the shadow of the trees.

And as I wrought, while all above  
And all around was fragrant air,  
In the sick burthen of my love  
It seemed each sun-thrilled blossom  
there  
Beat like a heart among the leaves.  
O heart that never beats nor heaves,  
In that one darkness lying still,  
What now to thee my love's great will,  
Or the fine web the sunshine weaves?

For now doth daylight disavow  
Those days,—nought left to see or hear.  
Only in solemn whispers now  
At night-time these things reach mine  
ear,  
When the leaf-shadows at a breath  
Shrink in the road, and all the heath,  
Forest and water, far and wide,  
In limpid starlight glorified,  
Lie like the mystery of death.

Last night at last I could have slept,  
And yet delayed my sleep till dawn,  
Still wandering. Then it was I wept:  
For unawares I came upon  
Those glades where once she walked  
with me:

And as I stood there suddenly,  
All wan with traversing the night,  
Upon the desolate verge of light  
Yearned loud the iron-bosomed sea.

Even so, where Heaven holds breath and  
hears  
The beating heart of Love's own  
breast,—  
Where round the secret of all spheres  
All angels lay their wings to rest,—  
How shall my soul stand rapt and awed,  
When, by the new birth borne abroad  
Throughout the music of the suns,  
It enters in her soul at once  
And knows the silence there for God!

Here with her face doth memory sit  
Meanwhile, and wait the day's decline,  
Till other eyes shall look from it,  
Eyes of the spirit's Palestine,  
Even than the old gaze tenderer:  
While hopes and aims long lost with her  
Stand round her image side by side,  
Like tombs of pilgrims that have died  
About the Holy Sepulchre. 1847. 1870.

#### THE CARD-DEALER

COULD you not drink her gaze like wine?  
Yet though its splendor swoon  
Into the silence languidly  
As a tune into a tune,  
Those eyes unravel the coiled night  
And know the stars at noon.

The gold that's heaped beside her hand,  
In truth rich prize it were;  
And rich the dreams that wreath her  
brows  
With magic stillness there;  
And he were rich who should unwind  
That woven golden hair.

Around her, where she sits, the dance  
Now breathes its eager heat;  
And not more lightly or more true  
Fall there the dancers' feet  
Than fall her cards on the bright board  
As 'twere an heart that beat.

Her fingers let them softly through,  
Smooth polished silent things;  
And each one as it falls reflects  
In swift light-shadowings,  
Blood-red and purple, green and blue,  
The great eyes of her rings.

Whom plays she with? With thee,  
who lov'st



Those gems upon her hand ;  
With me, who search her secret brows ;  
With all men, bless'd or bann'd.  
We play together, she and we,  
Within a vain strange land :

A land without any order,—  
Day even as night, (one saith,)—  
Where who lieth down ariseth not  
Nor the sleeper awakeneth ;  
A land of darkness as darkness itself  
And of the shadow of death.

What be her cards, you ask? Even  
these:—

The heart, that doth but crave  
More, having fed ; the diamond,  
Skilled to make base seem brave ;  
The club, for smiting in the dark ;  
The spade, to dig a grave.

And do you ask what game she plays?  
With me 'tis lost or won ;  
With thee it is playing still ; with him  
It is not well begun ;  
But 'tis a game she plays with all  
Beneath the sway o' the sun.

Thou seest the card that falls, she knows  
The card that followeth :  
Her game in thy tongue is called Life,  
As ebbs thy daily breath :  
When she shall speak, thou'lt learn her  
tongue  
And know she calls it Death. 1870.

#### AT THE SUNRISE IN 1848

GOD said, Let there be light ! and there  
was light.  
Then heard we sounds as though the  
Earth did sing  
And the Earth's angel cried upon the  
wing :  
We saw priests fall together and turn  
white :  
And covered in the dust from the sun's  
sight,  
A king was spied, and yet another king.  
We said : "The round world keeps its  
balancing ;  
On this globe, they and we are opposite,—  
If it is day with us, with them 't is night.  
Still, Man, in thy just pride, remember  
this :  
Thou hadst not made that thy sons'  
sons shall ask  
What the word *king* may mean in their  
day's task,

But for the light that led : and if light is,  
It is because God said, Let there be  
light." 1848. 1886.

#### ON REFUSAL OF AID BETWEEN NATIONS

NOR that the earth is changing, O my  
God !

Nor that the seasons totter in their  
walk,—

Not that the virulent ill of act and talk  
Seethes ever as a winepress ever trod,—  
Not therefore are we certain that the rod  
Weighs in thine hand to smite thy  
world ; though now

Beneath thine hand so many nations  
bow,

So many kings:—not therefore, O my  
God!—

But because Man is parcelled out in men  
To-day ; because, for any wrongful blow,  
No man not stricken asks, "I would be  
told

Why thou dost thus ;" but his heart  
whispers then,

"He is he, I am I." By this we know,  
That the earth falls asunder, being old.  
1848 or 1849. 1870.

#### MARY'S GIRLHOOD

(For a Picture)

##### I

THIS is that blessed Mary, pre-elect  
God's Virgin. Gone is a great while,  
and she  
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.  
Unto God's will she brought devout  
respect,  
Profound simplicity of intellect,  
And supreme patience. From her  
mother's knee  
Faithful and hopeful ; wise in charity ;  
Strong in grave peace ; in pity circum-  
spect.  
So held she through her girlhood ; as it  
were  
An angel-watered lily, that near God  
Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at  
home  
She woke in her white bed, and had no  
fear  
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt  
awed :  
Because the fulness of the time was  
come.

## II

THESE are the symbols. On that cloth  
 of red  
 I' the centre is the Tripoint : perfect each,  
 Except the second of its points, to teach  
 That Christ is not yet born. The books  
 —whose head  
 Is golden Charity, as Paul hath said—  
 Those virtues are wherein the soul is  
 rich :  
 Therefore on them the lily standeth,  
 which  
 Is Innocence, being interpreted.  
 The seven-thorn'd briar and the palm  
 seven-leaved  
 Are her great sorrow and her great  
 reward.  
 Until the end be full, the Holy One  
 Abides without. She soon shall have  
 achieved  
 Her perfect purity : yea, God the Lord  
 Shall soon vouchsafe His Son to be her  
 Son. 1848, 1850. 1849, 1870.

## FOR A VENETIAN PASTORAL

BY GIORGIONE

*(In the Louvre)*

WATER, for anguish of the solstice :—  
 nay,  
 But dip the vessel, slowly,—nay, but  
 lean  
 And hark how at its verge the wave  
 sighs in  
 Reluctant. Hush ! Beyond all depth  
 away  
 The heat lies silent at the brink of day :  
 Now the hand trails upon the viol-string  
 That sobs, and the brown faces cease to  
 sing,  
 Sad with the whole of pleasure. Whither  
 stray  
 Her eyes now, from whose mouth the  
 slim pipes creep  
 And leave it pouting, while the shadowed  
 grass  
 Is cool against her naked side ? Let be :—  
 Say nothing now unto her lest she weep,  
 Nor name this ever. Be it as it was.—  
 Life touching lips with Immortality.  
 1850.

## THE SEA-LIMITS

CONSIDER the sea's listless chime :  
 Time's self it is, made audible,—  
 The murmur of the earth's own shell.

Secret continuance sublime  
 Is the sea's end : our sight may pass  
 No furlong further. Since time was,  
 This sound hath told the lapse of time.

No quiet, which is death's,—it hath  
 The mournfulness of ancient life,  
 Enduring always at dull strife.  
 As the world's heart of rest and wrath,  
 Its painful pulse is in the sands.  
 Last utterly, the whole sky stands,  
 Gray and not known, along its path.

Listen alone beside the sea,  
 Listen alone among the woods ;  
 Those voices of twin solitudes  
 Shall have one sound alike to thee :  
 Hark where the murmurs of thronged  
 men  
 Surge and sink back and surge again,—  
 Still the one voice of wave and tree.

Gather a shell from the strown beach  
 And listen at its lips : they sigh  
 The same desire and mystery,  
 The echo of the whole sea's speech.  
 And all mankind is thus at heart  
 Not anything but what thou art :  
 And Earth, Sea, Man, are all in each.  
 1850.

## THE MIRROR

SHE knew it not,—most perfect pain  
 To learn : this too she knew not. Strife  
 For me, calm hers, as from the first.  
 'T was but another bubble burst  
 Upon the curdling draught of life,—  
 My silent patience mine again.

As who, of forms that crowd unknown  
 Within a distant mirror's shade,  
 Deems such an one himself, and  
 makes  
 Some sign ; but when the image  
 shakes  
 No whit, he finds his thought betray'd,  
 And must seek elsewhere for his own.  
 1850. 1886.

## A YOUNG FIR-WOOD

THESE little firs to-day are things  
 To clasp into a giant's cap.  
 Or fans to suit his lady's lap.  
 From many winters many springs  
 Shall cherish them in strength and sap,  
 Till they be marked upon the map,  
 A wood for the wind's wanderings.



All seed is in the sower's hands :  
 And what at first was trained to spread  
 Its shelter for some single head,—  
 Yea, even such fellowship of wands,—  
 May hide the sunset, and the shade  
 Of its great multitude be laid  
 Upon the earth and elder sands.  
*November, 1850. 1870.*

## PENUMBRA

I DID not look upon her eyes,  
 (Though scarcely seen, with no surprise,  
 'Mid many eyes a single look,)  
 Because they should not gaze rebuke,  
 At night, from stars in sky and brook.

I did not take her by the hand,  
 (Though little was to understand  
 From touch of hand all friends might  
 take,)  
 Because it should not prove a flake  
 Burnt in my palm to boil and ache.

I did not listen to her voice,  
 (Though none had noted, where at choice  
 All might rejoice in listening,)  
 Because no such a thing should cling  
 In the wood's moan at evening.

I did not cross her shadow once,  
 (Though from the hollow west the sun's  
 Last shadow runs along so far,)  
 Because in June it should not bar  
 My ways, at noon when fevers are.

They told me she was sad that day,  
 (Though wherefore tell what love's sooth-  
 say,  
 Sooner than they, did register?)  
 And my heart leapt and wept to her,  
 And yet I did not speak nor stir.

So shall the tongues of the sea's foam  
 (Though many voices therewith come  
 From drowned hope's home to cry to  
 me.)  
 Bewail one hour the more, when sea  
 And wind are one with memory. 1870.

## SISTER HELEN

"WHY did you melt your waxen man,  
 Sister Helen?  
 To-day is the third since you began."  
 "The time was long, yet the time ran,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Three days to-day, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"But if you have done your work aright,  
 Sister Helen,  
 You'll let me play, for you said I might."  
 "Be very still in your play to-night,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Third night, to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,  
 Sister Helen;  
 If now it be molten, all is well."  
 "Even so,—nay, peace! you cannot tell,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 O what is this, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,  
 Sister Helen;  
 How like dead folk he has dropped  
 away!"  
 "Nay now, of the dead what can you  
 say,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What of the dead, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,  
 Sister Helen,  
 Shines through the thinned wax red as  
 blood!"  
 "Nay now, when looked you yet on  
 blood,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 How pale she is, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick  
 and sore,  
 Sister Helen,  
 And I'll play without the gallery door."  
 "Aye, let me rest,—I'll lie on the floor,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What rest to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Here high up in the balcony,  
 Sister Helen,  
 The moon flies face to face with me."  
 "Aye, look and say whatever you see,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What sight to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,  
 Sister Helen;

In the shaken trees the chill stars  
shake."

"Hush, heard you a horse-tread as you  
spake,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

What sound to-night, between Hell and  
Heaven?)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,

Sister Helen,

Three horsemen that ride terribly."

"Little brother, whence come the three,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Whence should they come, between Hell  
and Heaven?)

"They come by the hill-verge from  
Boyne Bar,

Sister Helen,

And one draws nigh, but two are afar."

"Look, look, do you know them who  
they are,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Who should they be, between Hell and  
Heaven?)

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,

Sister Helen,

For I know the white mane on the blast."

"The hour has come, has come at last,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Her hour at last, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"He has made a sign and called Halloo!

Sister Helen,

And he says that he would speak with  
you."

"Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew,

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Why laughs she thus, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry.

Sister Helen,

That Keith of Ewern's like to die."

"And he and thou, and thou and I,

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

And they and we, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,

Sister Helen,

He sickened, and lies since then forlorn."

'For bridegroom's side is the bride a  
thorn,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"Three days and nights he has lain  
abed,

Sister Helen,

And he prays in torment to be dead."

"The thing may chance, if he have  
prayed,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

If he have prayed, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,

Sister Helen,

That you should take your curse away."

"My prayer was heard,—he need but  
pray

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Shall God not hear, between Hell and  
Heaven?)

"But he says, till you take back your  
ban,

Sister Helen,

His soul would pass, yet never can."

"Nay then, shall I slay a living man,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But he calls for ever on your name,

Sister Helen,

And says that he melts before a flame."

"My heart for his pleasure fared the  
same,

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Fire at the heart, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,

Sister Helen,

For I know the white plume on the  
blast."

"The hour, the sweet hour I forecast,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Is the hour sweet, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his  
horse,

Sister Helen;

But his words are drowned in the wind's  
course."

"Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear  
perforce,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What word now heard, between Hell and  
Heaven?)

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,  
Sister Helen,

Is ever to see you ere he die."

"In all that his soul sees, there am I,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
The soul's one sight, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,

Sister Helen,

And bids you mind the banks of Boyne."

"What else he broke will he ever join,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
No, never joined, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"He yields you these and craves full fain,

Sister Helen,

You pardon him in his mortal pain."

"What else he took will he give again,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Not twice to give, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"He calls your name in an agony,

Sister Helen,

That even dead Love must weep to see."

"Hate, born of Love, is blind as he,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Love turned to hate, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides  
fast,

Sister Helen,

For I know the white hair on the blast."

"The short, short hour will soon be past,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Will soon be past, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,

Sister Helen,

But oh! his voice is sad and weak!"

"What here should the mighty Baron  
seek,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,

Sister Helen,

The body dies, but the soul shall live."

"Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
As she forgives, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would  
rive,

Sister Helen,

To save his dear son's soul alive."

"Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,

Sister Helen,

To go with him for the love of God!"

"The way is long to his son's abode,

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
The way is long, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,

Sister Helen,

So darkly clad, I saw her not."

"See her now or never see aught,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What more to see, between Hell and  
Heaven?)

"Her hood falls back, and the moon  
shines fair,

Sister Helen,

On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."

"Blest hour of my power and her despair,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Hour blest and bann'd, between Hell and  
Heaven!)

"Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride  
did glow,

Sister Helen,

'Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago."

"One morn for pride and three days for  
woe.

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Three days, three nights, between Hell  
and Heaven!)

" Her clasped hands stretch from her  
bending head,  
Sister Helen;  
With the loud wind's wail her sobs are  
wed."  
" What wedding-strains hath her bridal-  
bed,

Little brother?"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What strain but death's, between Hell  
and Heaven?*)

" She may not speak, she sinks in a  
swoon,  
Sister Helen,  
She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."  
" Oh! might I but hear her soul's blithe  
tune,

Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother.  
Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" They've caught her to Westholm's  
saddle-bow,  
Sister Helen,  
And her moonlit hair gleams white in  
its flow."

" Let it turn whiter than winter snow,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother.  
Woe-withered gold, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,  
Sister Helen!  
More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."  
" No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother.  
His dying knell, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,  
Sister Helen;  
Is it in the sky or in the ground?"  
" Say, have they turned their horses  
round,

Little brother?"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother.  
What would she more, between Hell and  
Heaven?*)

" They have raised the old man from his  
knee,  
Sister Helen,  
And they ride in silence hastily."  
" More fast the naked soul doth flee,  
Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,  
The naked soul, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" Flank to flank are the three steeds  
gone,  
Sister Helen,  
But the lady's dark steed goes alone."  
" And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath  
flown,

Little brother."  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother.  
The lonely ghost, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,  
Sister Helen,  
And weary sad they look by the hill."  
" But he and I are sadder still,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother.  
Most sad of all, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" See, see, the wax has dropped from its  
place,  
Sister Helen,  
And the flames are winning up apace!"  
" Yet here they burn but for a space,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Here for a space, between Hell and  
Heaven!*)

" Ah! what white thing at the door has  
cross'd,  
Sister Helen?  
Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?"  
" A soul that's lost as mine is lost,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and  
Heaven!*) 1853, 1870.

#### THE BURDEN OF NINEVEH

IN our Museum galleries  
To-day I lingered o'er the prize  
Dead Greece vouchsafes to living eyes,—  
Her Art for ever in fresh wise  
From hour to hour rejoicing me.  
Sighing I turned at last to win  
Once more the London dirt and din;  
And as I made the swing-door spin  
And issued, they were hoisting in  
A winged beast from Nineveh.

A human face the creature wore,  
And hoofs behind and hoofs before,  
And flanks with dark runes fretted o'er.

'T was bull, 't was mitred Minotaur,  
A dead disembowelled mystery;  
The mummy of a buried faith  
Stark from the charnel without scathe,  
Its wings stood for the light to bathe,—  
Such fossil cements as might swathe  
The very corpse of Nineveh.

The print of its first rush-wrapping,  
Wound ere it dried, still ribbed the  
thing.

What song did the brown maidens sing,  
From purple mouths alternating,  
When that was woven languidly?  
What vows, what rites, what prayers  
prefer'd,  
What songs has the strange image  
heard?

In what blind vigil stood interr'd  
For ages, till an English word  
Broke silence first at Nineveh?

Oh when upon each sculptured court,  
Where even the wind might not re-  
sort,—

O'er which Time passed, of like import  
With the wild Arab boys at sport,—  
A living face looked in to see :—  
Oh seemed it not—the spell once broke—  
As though the carven warriors woke,  
As though the shaft the string forsook,  
The cymbals clashed, the chariots shook,  
And there was life in Nineveh?

On London stones our sun anew  
The beast's recovered shadow threw.  
(No shade that plague of darkness knew,  
No light, no shade, while older grew  
By ages the old earth and sea.)

Lo thou! could all thy priests have  
shown

Such proof to make thy godhead known?  
From their dead Past thou liv'st alone  
And still thy shadow is thine own  
Even as of yore in Nineveh.

That day whereof we keep record,  
When near thy city-gates the Lord  
Sheltered his Jonah with a gourd,  
This sun, (I said) here present, pour'd  
Even thus this shadow that I see.  
This shadow has been shed the same  
From sun and moon,—from lamps which  
came

For prayer,—from fifteen days of flame,  
The last, while smouldered to a name  
Sardanapalus' Nineveh.

Within thy shadow, haply, once  
Sennacherib has knelt, whose sons

Smote him between the altar-stones:  
Or pale Semiramis her bones  
Of gold, her incense brought to thee,  
In love for grace, in war for aid: . . .  
Ay, and who else? . . . till 'neath thy  
shade

Within his trenches newly made  
Last year the Christian knelt and  
pray'd—

Not to thy strength—in Nineveh.

Now, thou poor god, within this hall  
Where the blank windows blind the wall  
From pedestal to pedestal,  
The kind of light shall on thee fall

Which London takes the day to be:  
While school-foundations in the act  
Of holiday, three files compact,  
Shall learn to view thee as a fact  
Connected with that zealous tract:  
"Rome,—Babylon and Nineveh."

Deemed they of this, those worshippers,  
When, in some mythic chain of verse  
Which man shall not again rehearse,  
The faces of thy ministers

Yearned pale with bitter ecstasy?  
Greece, Egypt, Rome,—did any god  
Before whose feet men knelt unabed  
Deem that in this unblest abode  
Another scarce more unknown god  
Should house with him, from Nineveh!

Ah! in what quarries lay the stone  
From which this pygmy pile has grown.  
Unto man's need how long unknown,  
Since thy vast temples, court and cone.

Rose far in desert history?  
Ah! what is here that does not lie  
All strange to thine awakened eye?  
Ah! what is here can testify  
(Save that dumb presence of the sky)  
Unto thy day and Nineveh?

Why, of those mummies in the room  
Above, there might indeed have come  
One out of Egypt to thy home,  
An alien. Nay, but were not some

Of these thine own "antiquity"?  
And now,—they and their gods and thou  
All relics here together,—now  
Whose profit? whether bull or cow,  
Isis or Ibis, who or how,

Whether of Thebes or Nineveh?

The consecrated metals found,  
And ivory tablets, underground,  
Winged teraphim and creatures crown'd  
When air and daylight filled the mound.

Fell into dust immediately.  
And even as these, the images  
Of awe and worship,—even as these,—  
So, smitten with the sun's increase,  
Her glory mouldered and did cease  
From immemorial Nineveh.

The day her builders made their halt,  
Those cities of the lake of salt  
Stood firmly 'stablished without fault,  
Made proud with pillars of basalt,  
With sardonyx and porphyry.  
The day that Jonah bore abroad  
To Nineveh the voice of God,  
A brackish lake lay in his road,  
Where erst Pride fixed her sure abode,  
As then in royal Nineveh.

The day when he, Pride's lord and Man's,  
Showed all the kingdoms at a glance  
To Him before whose countenance  
The years recede, the years advance,  
And said, Fall down and worship me :—  
'Mid all the pomp beneath that look,  
Then stirred there, haply, some rebuke,  
Where to the wind the salt pools shook,  
And in those tracts, of life forsook,  
That knew thee not, O Nineveh !

Delicate harlot ! On thy throne  
Thou with a world beneath thee prone  
In state for ages sat'st alone ;  
And needs were years and lustres flown  
Ere strength of man could vanquish  
thee :  
Whom even thy victor foes must bring,  
Still royal, among maids that sing  
As with doves' voices, taboring  
Upon their breasts, unto the King,—  
A kingly conquest, Nineveh !

. . . . Here woke my thought. The  
wind's slow sway  
Had waxed ; and like the human play  
Of scorn that smiling spreads away,  
The sunshine shivered off the day :  
The callous wind, it seemed to me,  
Swept up the shadow from the ground :  
And pale as whom the Fates astound,  
The god forlorn stood winged and  
crown'd ;  
Within I knew the cry lay bound  
Of the dumb soul of Nineveh.

And as I turned, my sense half shut  
Still saw the crowds of kerb and rut  
Go past as marshalled to the strut  
Of ranks in gypsum quaintly cut.  
It seemed in one same pageantry

They followed forms which had been  
erst ;  
To pass, till on my sight should burst  
That future of the best or worst  
When some may question which was  
first,  
Of London or of Nineveh.

For as that Bull-god once did stand  
And watched the burial-clouds of sand,  
Till these at last without a hand  
Rose o'er his eyes, another land,  
And blinded him with destiny :—  
So may he stand again : till now,  
In ships of unknown sail and prow,  
Some tribe of the Australian plough  
Bear him afar,—a relic now  
Of London, not of Nineveh !

Or it may chance indeed that when  
Man's age is hoary among men,—  
His centuries threescore and ten,—  
His furthest childhood shall seem then  
More clear than later times may be :  
Who, finding in this desert place  
This form, shall hold us for some race  
That walked not in Christ's lowly ways,  
But bowed its pride and vowed its praise  
Unto the god of Nineveh.

The smile rose first,—anon drew nigh  
The thought : . . . Those heavy wings  
spread high  
So sure of flight, which do not fly ;  
That set gaze never on the sky ;  
Those scriptured flanks it cannot see :  
Its crown, a brow-contracting load ;  
Its planted feet which trust the sod : . . .  
(So grew the image as I trod :)  
O Nineveh, was this thy God,—  
Thine also, mighty Nineveh ? 1856.

# MARY MAGDALENE

AT THE DOOR OF SIMON THE PHARISEE

(For a Drawing<sup>1</sup>)

" WHY wilt thou cast the roses from thine  
hair ?  
Nay, be thou all a rose,—wreath, lips,  
and cheek.  
Nay, not this house,—that banquet-  
house we seek ;  
See how they kiss and enter ; come thou  
there.

<sup>1</sup> In the drawing Mary has left a festal procession, and is ascending by a sudden impulse the steps of the house where she sees Christ. Her lover has followed her and is trying to turn her back.



This delicate day of love we two will  
share  
Till at our ear love's whispering night  
shall speak.  
What, sweet one,—hold'st thou still the  
foolish freak?  
Nay, when I kiss thy feet they 'll leave  
the stair."  
"Oh loose me! See'st thou not my  
Bridegroom's face  
That draws me to Him? For His feet  
my kiss,  
My hair, my tears He craves to-day:—  
and oh!  
What words can tell what other day and  
place  
Shall see me clasp those blood-stained  
feet of His?  
He needs me, calls me, loves me: let me  
go!" 1856-7. 1870.

## ASPECTA MEDUSA

(For a Drawing)

ANDROMEDA, by Perseus saved and wed,  
Hankered each day to see the Gorgon's  
head:  
Till o'er a fount he held it, bade her lean,  
And mirrored in the wave was safely  
seen  
That death she lived by.  
Let not thine eyes know  
Any forbidden thing itself, although  
It once should save as well as kill: but  
be  
Its shadow upon life enough for thee.  
1870.

## LOVE'S NOCTURN

MASTER of the murmuring courts  
Where the shapes of sleep convene!—  
Lo! my spirit here exhorts  
All the powers of thy demesne  
For their aid to woo my queen.  
What reports  
Yield thy jealous courts unseen?  
Vaporous, unaccountable,  
Dreamland lies forlorn of light,  
Hollow like a breathing shell.  
Ah! that from all dreams I might  
Choose one dream and guide its flight!  
I know well  
What her sleep should tell to-night.  
There the dreams are multitudes:  
Some that will not wait for sleep,  
Deep within the August woods;  
Some that hum while rest may steep

Weary labor laid a-heap;  
Interludes,  
Some, of grievous moods that we

Poets' fancies all are there:  
There the elf-girls flood with win  
Valleys full of plaintive air;  
There breathe perfumes; then  
rings  
Whirl the foam-bewildered spring  
Siren there  
Winds her dizzy hair and sings.

Thence the one dream mutually  
Dreamed in bridal unison,  
Less than waking ecstasy;  
Half-formed visions that make me  
In the house of birth alone;  
And what we,  
At death's wicket, see, unknown.

But for mine own sleep, it lies  
In one gracious form's control,  
Fair with honorable eyes,  
Lamps of a translucent soul;  
O their glance is loftiest dole,  
Sweet and wise,  
Wherein Love descries his goal.

Reft of her, my dreams are all  
Clammy trance that fears the sky:  
Changing footpaths shift and fall;  
From polluted coverts nigh,  
Miserable phantoms sigh:  
Quakes the pall,  
And the funeral goes by.

Master, is it soothly said  
That, as echoes of man's speech  
Far in secret clefts are made,  
So do all men's bodies reach  
Shadows o'er thy sunken beach,—  
Shape or shade  
In those halls portrayed of each?

Ah! might I, by thy good grace  
Groping in the windy stair,  
(Darkness and the breath of space,  
Like loud waters everywhere),  
Meeting mine own image there  
Face to face,  
Send it from that place to her!

Nay, not I: but oh! do thou.  
Master, from thy shadow kind  
Call my body's phantom now:  
Bid it bear its face declin'd  
Till its flight her slumbers find,  
And her brow  
Feel its presence bow like wind.

Where in groves the gracile Spring  
Trembles, with mute orison  
Confidently strengthening.  
Water's voice and wind's as one  
Shed an echo in the sun.  
Soft as Spring,  
Master, bid it sing and moan.

Song shall tell how glad and strong  
Is the night she soothes away;  
Moan shall grieve with that parched  
tongue  
Of the brazen hours of day:  
Sounds as of the springtide they,  
Moan and song.  
While the chill months long for May.

Not the prayers which with all leave  
The world's fluent woes prefer.—  
Not the praise the world doth give,  
Dulcet fulsome whisperer;—  
Let it yield my love to her,  
And achieve  
Strength that shall not grieve or err.

Wheresoe'er my dreams befall,  
Both at night-watch (let it say),  
And where round the sun-dial  
The reluctant hours of day,  
Heartless, hopeless of their way,  
Rest and call;  
There her glance doth fall and stay.

Suddenly her face is there;  
So do mounting vapors wreath  
Subtle-scented transports where  
The black fir-wood sets its teeth.  
Part the boughs and look beneath,—  
Lilies share  
Secret waters there, and breathe.

Master, bid my shadow bend  
Whispering thus till birth of light,  
Lest new shapes that sleep may send  
Scatter all its work to flight;—  
Master, master of the night,  
Bid it spend  
Speech, song, prayer, and end aright.

Yet, ah me! if at her head  
There another phantom lean  
Murmuring o'er the fragrant bed,—  
Ah! and if my spirit's queen  
Smile those alien words between,—  
Ah! poor shade!  
Shall it strive, or fade unseen?

How should love's own messenger  
Strive with love and be love's foe?  
Master, nay! If thus, in her,

Sleep a wedded heart should show,—  
Silent let mine image go,  
Its old share  
Of thy spell-bound air to know.

Like a vapor wan and mute,  
Like a flame, so let it pass;  
One low sigh across her lute,  
One dull breath against her glass;  
And to my sad soul, alas!  
One salute  
Cold as when death's foot shall pass.

Then, too, let all hopes of mine,  
All vain hopes by night and day,  
Slowly at thy summoning sign  
Rise up pallid and obey.  
Dreams, if this is thus, were they:—  
Be they thine,  
And to dreamworld pine away.

Yet from old time, life, not death,  
Master, in thy rule is rife:  
Lo! through thee, with mingling breath,  
Adam woke beside his wife.  
O Love bring me so, for strife,  
Force and faith,  
Bring me so not death but life!

Yea, to Love himself is pour'd  
This frail song of hope and fear.  
Thou art Love, of one accord  
With kind Sleep to bring her near,  
Still-eyed, deep-eyed, ah how dear!  
Master, Lord,  
In her name implor'd, O hear! 1870.

#### FIRST LOVE REMEMBERED

PEACE in her chamber, wheresoe'er  
It be, a holy place:  
The thought still brings my soul such  
grace  
As morning meadows wear.

Whether it still be small and light,  
A maid's who dreams alone,  
As from her orchard-gate the moon  
Its ceiling showed at night:

Or whether, in a shadow dense  
As nuptial hymns invoke,  
Innocent maidenhood awoke  
To married innocence:

There still the thanks unheard await  
The unconscious gift bequeathed;  
For there my soul this hour has  
breathed  
An air inviolate. 1870.



## PLIGHTED PROMISE

In a soft-complexioned sky,  
 Fleeting rose and kindling gray,  
 Have you seen Aurora fly  
 At the break of day?  
 So my maiden, so my plighted may  
 Blushing cheek and gleaming eye  
 Lifts to look my way.

Where the inmost leaf is stirred  
 With the heart-beat of the grove,  
 Have you heard a hidden bird  
 Cast her note above?  
 So my lady, so my lovely love,  
 Echoing Cupid's prompted word,  
 Makes a tune thereof.

Have you seen, at heaven's mid-height,  
 In the moon-rack's ebb and tide,  
 Venus leap forth burning white,  
 Dian pale and hide?  
 So my bright breast-jewel, so my bride,  
 One sweet night, when fear takes  
 flight,  
 Shall leap against my side. 1870.

## SUDDEN LIGHT

I HAVE been here before,  
 But when or how I cannot tell:  
 I know the grass beyond the door,  
 The sweet keen smell,  
 The sighing sound, the lights around  
 the shore.

You have been mine before,—  
 How long ago I may not know:  
 But just when at that swallow's soar  
 Your neck turned so,  
 Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before?  
 And shall not thus time's eddying  
 flight  
 Still with our lives our loves restore  
 In death's despite,  
 And day and night yield one delight  
 once more? 1863.

## THE WOODSPURGE

THE wind flapped loose, the wind was  
 still,  
 Shaken out dead from tree and hill:  
 I had walked on at the wind's will,—  
 I sat now, for the wind was still.

Between my knees my forehead was,—  
 My lips, drawn in, said not Alas!

My hair was over in the grass,  
 My naked ears heard the day pass.

My eyes, wide open, had the run  
 Of some ten weeds to fix upon;  
 Among those few, out of the sun,  
 The woodspurge flowered, three cups in  
 one.

From perfect grief there need not be  
 Wisdom or even memory:  
 One thing then learnt remains to me—  
 The woodspurge has a cup of three. 1871.

## THE HONEYSUCKLE

I PLUCKED a honeysuckle where  
 The hedge on high is quick with thorn,  
 And climbing for the prize, was torn,  
 And fouled my feet in quag-water;  
 And by the thorns and by the wind  
 The blossom that I took was thinn'd  
 And yet I found it sweet and fair.

Thence to a richer growth I came,  
 Where, nursed in mellow intercourse,  
 The honeysuckles sprang by scores,  
 Not harried like my single stem,  
 All virgin lamps of scent and dew.  
 So from my hand that first I threw.  
 Yet plucked not any more of them. 1870.

## A LITTLE WHILE

A LITTLE while a little love  
 The hour yet bears for thee and me  
 Who have not drawn the veil to see  
 If still our heaven be lit above.  
 Thou merely, at the day's last sigh,  
 Hast felt thy soul prolong the tone,  
 And I have heard the night-wind cry  
 And deemed its speech mine own.

A little while a little love  
 The scattering autumn hoards for us  
 Whose bower is not yet ruinous  
 Nor quite unleaved our songless grove.  
 Only across the shaken boughs  
 We hear the flood-tides seek the sea.  
 And deep in both our hearts they rouse  
 One wail for thee and me.

A little while a little love  
 May yet be ours who have not said  
 The word it makes our eyes afraid  
 To know that each is thinking of.  
 Not yet the end: be our lips dumb  
 In smiles a little season yet:  
 I'll tell thee, when the end is come,  
 How we may best forget. 1870.

TROY TOWN

HEAVENBORN HELEN, Sparta's queen,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Had two breasts of heavenly sheen,  
 The sun and moon of the heart's desire :  
 All Love's lordship lay between.  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

Helen knelt at Venus' shrine,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Saying "A little gift is mine,  
 A little gift for a heart's desire.  
 Hear me speak and make me a sign!  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"Look, I bring thee a carven cup;  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 See it here as I hold it up,—  
 Shaped it is to the heart's desire,  
 Fit to fill when the gods would sup.  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"It was moulded like my breast;  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 He that sees it may not rest,  
 Rest at all for his heart's desire.  
 O give ear to my heart's behest!  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"See my breast, how like it is;  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 See it bare for the air to kiss!  
 Is the cup to thy heart's desire?  
 O for the breast, O make it his!  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"Yea, for my bosom here I sue:  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Thou must give it where 't is due,  
 Give it there to the heart's desire.  
 Whom do I give my bosom to?  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"Each twin breast is an apple sweet!  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Once an apple stirred the beat  
 Of thy heart with the heart's desire:  
 Say, who brought it then to thy feet?  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"They that claimed it then were three:  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 For thy sake two hearts did he

Make forlorn of the heart's desire.  
 Do for him as he did for thee!  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

"Mine are apples grown to the south,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Grown to taste in the days of drouth,  
 Taste and waste to the heart's desire:  
 Mine are apples meet for his mouth!  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

Venus looked on Helen's gift,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Looked and smiled with subtle drift,  
 Saw the work of her heart's desire:—  
 "There thou kneel'st for Love to lift!"  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

Venus looked in Helen's face,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Knew far off an hour and place,  
 And fire lit from the heart's desire;  
 Laughed and said, "Thy gift hath  
 grace!",  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

Cupid looked on Helen's breast,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Saw the heart within its nest,  
 Saw the flame of the heart's desire,—  
 Marked his arrow's burning crest.  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

Cupid took another dart,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Fledged it for another heart,  
 Winged the shaft with the heart's desire,  
 Drew the string and said, "Depart!"  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*

Paris turned upon his bed,  
*(O Troy Town!)*  
 Turned upon his bed and said,  
 Dead at heart with the heart's desire,—  
 "O to clasp her golden head!"  
*(O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!)*  
 1870.

THE STREAM'S SECRET

WHAT thing unto mine ear  
 Wouldst thou convey,—what secret  
 thing,  
 O wandering water ever whispering?

Surely thy speech shall be of her.  
Thou water, O thou whispering wanderer,  
What message dost thou bring?

Say, hath not Love leaned low  
This hour beside thy far well-head,  
And there through jealous hollowed  
fingers said  
The thing that most I long to know,—  
Murmuring with curls all dabbled in thy  
flow  
And washed lips rosy red?

He told it to thee there  
Where thy voice hath a louder tone;  
But where it welters to this little moan  
His will decrees that I should hear.  
Now speak: for with the silence is no  
fear,  
And I am all alone.

Shall Time not still endow  
One hour with life, and I and she  
Slake in one kiss the thirst of memory?  
Say, stream; lest Love should disavow  
Thy service, and the bird upon the  
bough  
Sing first to tell it me.

What whisperest thou? Nay, why  
Name the dead hours? I mind them  
well.  
Their ghosts in many darkened door-  
ways dwell  
With desolate eyes to know them by.  
That hour must still be born ere it can  
die  
Of that I'd have thee tell.

But hear, before thou speak!  
Withhold, I pray, the vain behest  
That while the maze hath still its bower  
for quest  
My burning heart should cease to seek.  
Be sure that Love ordained for souls  
more meek  
His roadside dells of rest.

Stream, when this silver thread  
In flood-time is a torrent brown,  
May any bulwark bind thy foaming  
crown?  
Shall not the waters surge and spread  
And to the crannied boulders of their  
bed  
Still shoot the dead drift down?

Let no rebuke find place  
In speech of thine: or it shall prove

That thou dost ill expound the words of  
Love.  
Even as thine eddy's rippling race  
Would blur the perfect image of his face  
I will have none thereof.

O learn and understand  
That 'gainst the wrongs himself did  
wreak  
Love sought her aid; until her shadowy  
cheek  
And eyes beseeching gave command:  
And compassed in her close compassion-  
ate hand  
My heart must burn and speak.

For then at last we spoke  
What eyes so oft had told to eyes  
Through that long-lingering silence  
whose half-sighs  
Alone the buried secret broke,  
Which with snatched hands and lips' re-  
verberate stroke  
Then from the heart did rise.

But she is far away  
Now: nor the hours of night grown  
hoar  
Bring yet to me, long gazing from the  
door,  
The wind-stirred robe of roseate gray  
And rose-crown of the hour that leads  
the day  
When we shall meet once more.

Dark as thy blinded wave  
When brimming midnight floods the  
glen,—  
Bright as the laughter of thy runnels  
when  
The dawn yields all the light they  
crave;  
Even so these hours to wound and that  
to save  
Are sisters in Love's ken.

Oh sweet her bending grace  
Then when I kneel beside her feet;  
And sweet her eyes' o'erhanging  
heaven; and sweet  
The gathering folds of her embrace;  
And her fall'n hair at last shed round  
my face  
When breaths and tears shall meet.

Beneath her sheltering hair,  
In the warm silence near her breast,  
Our kisses and our sobs shall sink to rest;  
As in some still trance made aware

That day and night have wrought to  
fulness there  
And Love has built our nest.

And as in the dim grove,  
When the rains cease that hushed  
them long,  
'Mid glistening boughs the song-birds  
wake to song,—  
So from our hearts deep-shrined in  
love,  
While the leaves throb beneath, around,  
above,  
The quivering notes shall throng.

Till tenderest words found vain  
Draw back to wonder mute and deep,  
And closed lips in closed arms a silence  
keep,  
Subdued by memory's circling strain,—  
The wind-rapt sound that the wind  
brings again  
While all the willows weep.

Then by her summoning art  
Shall memory conjure back the sere  
Autumnal Springs, from many a dying  
year  
Born dead ; and, bitter to the heart,  
The very ways where now we walk apart  
Who then shall cling so near.

And with each thought new-grown,  
Some sweet caress or some sweet name  
Low-breathed shall let me know her  
thought the same :  
Making me rich with every tone  
And touch of the dear heaven so long  
unknown  
That filled my dreams with flame.

Pity and love shall burn  
In her pressed cheek and cherishing  
hands ;  
And from the living spirit of love that  
stands  
Between her lips to soothe and yearn,  
Each separate breath shall clasp me  
round in turn  
And loose my spirit's bands.

Oh passing sweet and dear,  
Then when the worshipped form and  
face  
Are felt at length in darkling close em-  
brace ;  
Round which so oft the sun shone clear,  
With mocking light and pitiless atmo-  
sphere,  
In many an hour and place.

Ah me ! with what proud growth  
Shall that hour's thirsting race be run ;  
While, for each several sweetness still  
begun  
Afresh, endures love's endless drouth ;  
Sweet hands, sweet hair, sweet cheeks,  
sweet eyes, sweet mouth,  
Each singly wooed and won.

Yet most with the sweet soul  
Shall love's espousals then be knit ;  
What time the governing cloud sheds  
peace from it  
O'er tremulous wings that touch the  
goal,  
And on the unmeasured height of Love's  
control  
The lustral fires are lit.

Therefore, when breast and cheek  
Now part, from long embraces free,—  
Each on the other gazing shall but see  
A self that has no need to speak :  
All things unsought, yet nothing more  
to seek,—  
One love in unity.

O water wandering past,—  
Albeit to thee I speak this thing,  
O water, thou that wanderest whispering,  
Thou keep'st thy counsel to the last.  
What spell upon thy bosom should Love  
cast,  
Its secret thence to wring ?

Nay, must thou hear the tale  
Of the past days,—the heavy debt  
Of life that obdurate time withholds,—  
ere yet  
To win thine ear these prayers prevail.  
And by thy voice Love's self with high  
All-hail  
Yield up the amulet ?

How should all this be told ?—  
All the sad sum of wayworn days ;—  
Heart's anguish in the impenetrable  
maze ;  
And on the waste uncolored wold  
The visible burthen of the sun grown  
cold  
And the moon's laboring gaze ?

Alas ! shall hope be nurs'd  
On life's all-succoring breast in vain,  
And made so perfect only to be slain ?  
Or shall not rather the sweet thirst  
Even yet rejoice the heart with warmth  
dispers'd  
And strength grown fair again ?

Stands it not by the door—  
 Love's Hour—till she and I shall meet  
 With bodiless form and unapparent feet  
 That cast no shadow yet before,  
 Though round its head the dawn begins  
 to pour  
 The breath that makes day sweet?

Its eyes invisible  
 Watch till the dial's thin-thrown shade  
 Be born,—yea, till the journeying line  
 be laid  
 Upon the point that wakes the spell,  
 And there in lovelier light than tongue  
 can tell  
 Its presence stand array'd.

Its soul remembers yet  
 Those sunless hours that passed it by ;  
 And still it hears the night's disconsolate cry,  
 And feels the branches wringing wet  
 Cast on its brow, that may not once forget,  
 Dumb tears from the blind sky.

But oh! when now her foot  
 Draws near, for whose sake night and day  
 Were long in weary longing sighed away,—  
 The hour of Love, 'mid airs grown mute,  
 Shall sing beside the door, and Love's own lute  
 Thrill to the passionate lay.

Thou know'st, for Love has told  
 Within thine ear, O stream, how soon  
 That song shall lift its sweet appointed tune.

O tell me, for my lips are cold,  
 And in my veins the blood is waxing old  
 Even while I beg the boon.

So, in that hour of sighs  
 Assuaged, shall we beside this stone  
 Yield thanks for grace; while in thy mirror shown

The twofold image softly lies,  
 Until we kiss, and each in other's eyes  
 Is imaged all alone.

Still silent? Can no art  
 Of Love's then move thy pity? Nay,  
 To thee let nothing come that owns his sway:  
 Let happy lovers have no part

With thee; nor even so sad and poor a heart  
 As thou hast spurned to-day.

To-day? Lo! night is here.  
 The glen grows heavy with some veil  
 Risen from the earth or fall'n to make  
 earth pale;  
 And all stands hushed to eye and ear,  
 Until the night-wind shake the shade  
 like fear  
 And every covert quail.

Ah! by another wave  
 On other airs the hour must come  
 Which to thy heart, my love, shall call  
 me home.  
 Between the lips of the low cave  
 Against that night the lapping waters  
 lave,  
 And the dark lips are dumb.

But there Love's self doth stand,  
 And with Life's weary wings far flown,  
 And with Death's eyes that make the  
 water moan,  
 Gathers the water in his hand:  
 And they that drink know nought of  
 sky or land  
 But only love alone.

O soul-sequestered face  
 Far off,—O were that night but now!  
 So even beside that stream even I and  
 thou  
 Through thirsting lips should draw  
 Love's grace,  
 And in the zone of that supreme embrace  
 Bind aching breast and brow.

O water whispering  
 Still through the dark into mine ears,—  
 As with mine eyes, is it not now with  
 hers?—

Mine eyes that add to thy cold spring,  
 Wan water, wandering water weltering,  
 This hidden tide of tears. 1870.

#### LOVE-LILY

BETWEEN the hands, between the brows,  
 Between the lips of Love-Lily,  
 A spirit is born whose birth endows  
 My blood with fire to burn through  
 me:  
 Who breathes upon my gazing eyes,  
 Who laughs and murmurs in mine ear,  
 At whose least touch my color flies,  
 And whom my life grows faint to heat.

Within the voice, within the heart,  
 Within the mind of Love-Lily,  
 A spirit is born who lifts apart  
 His tremulous wings and looks at me ;  
 Who on my mouth his finger lays,  
 And shows, while whispering lutes  
 confer,  
 That Eden of Love's watered ways  
 Whose winds and spirits worship her.

Brows, hands, and lips, heart, mind,  
 and voice,  
 Kisses and words of Love-Lily,—  
 Oh ! bid me with your joy rejoice  
 Till riotous longing rest in me !  
 Ah ! let not hope be still distraught,  
 But find in her its gracious goal,  
 Whose speech Truth knows not from  
 her thought  
 Nor Love her body from her soul.

1870.

## THE HOUSE OF LIFE

### THE SONNET

*A Sonnet is a moment's monument,—  
 Memorial from the Soul's eternity  
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that  
 it be.*

*Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,  
 Of its own arduous fulness reverent :  
 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,  
 As Day or Night may rule ; and let  
 Time see*

*Its flowering crest impearled and orient.  
 A Sonnet is a coin : its face reveals  
 The Soul,—its converse, to what Power  
 'tis due :—*

*Whether for tribute to the august appeals  
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,  
 It serve ; or 'mid the dark wharf's cav-  
 ernous breath,  
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to  
 Death.*

## PART I. YOUTH AND CHANGE

### I. LOVE ENTHRONED

I MARKED all kindred Powers the heart  
 finds fair :—  
 Truth, with awed lips ; and Hope, with  
 eyes upcast ;  
 And Fame, whose loud wings fan the  
 ashen Past  
 To signal-fires, Oblivion's flight to scare ;  
 And Youth, with still some single golden  
 hair

Unto his shoulder clinging, since the  
 last  
 Embrace wherein two sweet arms held  
 him fast ;  
 And Life, still wreathing flowers for  
 Death to wear.  
 Love's throne was not with these ; but  
 far above  
 All passionate wind of welcome and  
 farewell  
 He sat in breathless bowers they dream  
 not of ;  
 Though Truth foreknow Love's heart,  
 and Hope foretell,  
 And Fame be for Love's sake desirable,  
 And Youth be dear, and Life be sweet  
 to Love.

### II. BRIDAL BIRTH

As when desire, long darkling, dawns,  
 and first  
 The mother looks upon the new-born  
 child,  
 Even so my Lady stood at gaze and  
 smiled  
 When her soul knew at length the Love  
 it nurs'd.  
 Born with her life, creature of poignant  
 thirst  
 And exquisite hunger, at her heart  
 Love lay  
 Quickening in darkness, till a voice that  
 day  
 Cried on him, and the bonds of birth  
 were burst.  
 Now, shadowed by his wings, our faces  
 yearn  
 Together, as his fullgrown feet now  
 range  
 The grove, and his warm hands our  
 couch prepare :  
 Till to his song our bodiless souls in turn  
 Be born his children, when Death's nup-  
 tial change  
 Leaves us for light the halo of his hair.

### III. LOVE'S TESTAMENT

O THOU who at Love's hour ecstatically  
 Unto my heart dost ever more present,  
 Clothed with his fire, thy heart his tes-  
 tament :  
 Whom I have neared and felt thy breath  
 to be  
 The inmost incense of his sanctuary :  
 Who without speech hast owned him,  
 and, intent  
 Upon his will, thy life with mine hast  
 blent,

And murmured, "I am thine, thou 'rt  
one with me!"  
O what from thee the grace, to me the  
prize,  
And what to Love the glory,—when the  
whole  
Of the deep stair thou tread'st to the  
dim shoal  
And weary water of the place of sighs,  
And there dost work deliverance, as  
thine eyes  
Draw up my prisoned spirit to thy soul!

## IV. LOVESIGHT

WHEN do I see thee most, beloved one?  
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes  
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize  
The worship of that Love through thee  
made known?  
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two  
alone.)  
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies  
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage  
lies,  
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?  
O love, my love! if I no more should see  
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of  
thee,  
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—  
How then should sound upon Life's  
darkening slope  
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves  
of Hope,  
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

## V. HEART'S HOPE

By what word's power, the key of paths  
untrod,  
Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,  
Till parted waves of Song yield up the  
shore  
Even as that sea which Israel crossed  
dryshod?  
For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,  
Lady, I fain would tell how evermore  
Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor  
Thee from myself, neither our love from  
God.  
Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and  
thine, would I  
Draw from one loving heart such  
evidence  
As to all hearts all things shall signify;  
Tender as dawn's first hill-fire, and in-  
tense  
As instantaneous penetrating sense,  
In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs  
gone by.

## VIII. LOVE'S LOVERS

SOME ladies love the jewels in Love's  
zone  
And gold-tipped darts he hath for pain-  
less play  
In idle scornful hours he flings away;  
And some that listen to his lute's soft  
tone  
Do love to vaunt the silver praise their  
own;  
Some prize his blindfold sight; and  
there be they  
Who kissed his wings which brought  
him yesterday  
And thank his wings to-day that he is  
flown.  
My lady only loves the heart of Love:  
Therefore Love's heart, my lady, hath  
for thee  
His bower of unimagined flower and  
tree:  
There kneels he now, and all-anhun-  
gered of  
Thine eyes gray-lit in shadowing hair  
above,  
Seals with thy mouth his immortality.

## IX. PASSION AND WORSHIP

ONE flame-winged brought a white-  
winged harp-player  
Even where my lady and I lay all alone:  
Saying: "Behold, this minstrel is un-  
known;  
Bid him depart, for I am minstrel here:  
Only my strains are to Love's dear ones  
dear."  
Then said I: "Through thine hautboy's  
rapturous tone  
Unto my lady still this harp makes  
moan,  
And still she deems the cadence deep  
and clear."  
Then said my lady: "Thou art Passion  
of Love,  
And this Love's Worship: both he  
plights to me.  
Thy mastering music walks the sunlit  
sea:  
But where wan water trembles in the  
grove  
And the wan moon is all the light there-  
of,  
This harp still makes my name its vol-  
untary."

## X. THE PORTRAIT

O LORD of all compassionate control,  
O Love! let this my lady's picture glow

Under my hand to praise her name, and  
show  
Even of her inner self the perfect whole:  
That he who seeks her beauty's furthest  
goal,  
Beyond the light that the sweet glances  
throw  
And reflux wave of the sweet smile,  
may know  
The very sky and sea-line of her soul.  
Lo! it is done. Above the enthroning  
throat  
The mouth's mould testifies of voice and  
kiss,  
The shadowed eyes remember and fore-  
see.  
Her face is made her shrine. Let all men  
note  
That in all years (O Love, thy gift is  
this!)  
They that would look on her must come  
to me.

XI. THE LOVE-LETTER

WARMED by her hand and shadowed by  
her hair  
As close she leaned and poured her heart  
through thee,  
Whereof the articulate throbs accom-  
pany  
The smooth black stream that makes thy  
whiteness fair,—  
Sweet fluttering sheet, even of her  
breath aware,—  
Oh let thy silent song disclose to me  
That soul wherewith her lips and eyes  
agree  
Like married music in Love's answering  
air.  
Fain had I watched her when, at some  
fond thought,  
Her bosom to the writing closelier  
press'd,  
And her breast's secrets peered into her  
breast;  
When, through eyes raised an instant,  
her soul sought  
My soul, and from the sudden confluence  
caught  
The words that made her love the love-  
liest.

XII. THE LOVERS' WALK

SWEET twining hedgesflowers wind-stir-  
red in no wise  
On this June day; and hand that clings  
in hand:—

Still glades; and meeting faces scarcely  
fann'd:  
An osier-odored stream that draws the  
skies  
Deep to its heart; and mirrored eyes in  
eyes:—  
Fresh hourly wonder o'er the Summer  
land  
Of light and cloud; and two souls softly  
spann'd  
With one o'erarching heaven of smiles  
and sighs:—  
Even such their path, whose bodies lean  
unto  
Each other's visible sweetness amor-  
ously,—  
Whose passionate hearts lean by Love's  
high decree  
Together on his heart for ever true.  
As the cloud-foaming firmamental blue  
Rests on the blue line of a foamless sea.

XIII. YOUTH'S ANTIPHONY

"I LOVE you, sweet: how can you ever  
learn  
How much I love you?" "You I love  
even so,  
And so I learn it." "Sweet, you can-  
not know  
How fair you are." "If fair enough to  
earn  
Your love, so much is all my love's con-  
cern."  
"My love grows hourly, sweet." "Mine  
too doth grow.  
Yet love seemed full so many hours  
ago!"  
Thus lovers speak, till kisses claim their  
turn.  
Ah! happy they to whom such words as  
these  
In youth have served for speech the  
whole day long.  
Hour after hour, remote from the world's  
throng.  
Work, contest, fame, all life's confe-  
derate pleas,—  
What while Love breathed in sighs and  
silences  
Through two blent souls one rapturous  
undersong.

XIV. YOUTH'S SPRING-TRIBUTE

ON this sweet bank your head thrice  
sweet and dear  
I lay, and spread your hair on either  
side,



And see the newborn woodflowers bashful-eyed  
 Look through the golden tresses here and there.  
 On these debateable borders of the year  
 Spring's foot half falters; scarce she yet may know  
 The leafless blackthorn-blossom from the snow;  
 And through her bowers the wind's way still is clear.  
 But April's sun strikes down the glades to-day;  
 So shut your eyes upturned, and feel my kiss  
 Creep, as the Spring now thrills through every spray,  
 Up your warm throat to your warm lips; for this  
 Is even the hour of Love's sworn suit-service,  
 With whom cold hearts are counted castaway.

#### XV. THE BIRTH-BOND

HAVE you not noted, in some family  
 Where two were born of a first marriage-bed,  
 How still they own their gracious bond, though fed  
 And nursed on the forgotten breast and knee?—  
 How to their father's children they shall be  
 In act and thought of one goodwill; but each  
 Shall for the other have, in silence speech,  
 And in a word complete community?  
 Even so, when first I saw you, seemed it, love,  
 That among souls allied to mine was yet  
 One nearer kindred than life hinted of.  
 O born with me somewhere that men forget,  
 And though in years of sight and sound unmet,  
 Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough!

#### XVII. BEAUTY'S PAGEANT

WHAT dawn-pulse at the heart of heaven, or last  
 Incarnate flower of culminating day,—  
 What marshalled marvels on the skirts of May.  
 Or song full-quired, sweet June's enco-miast;

What glory of change by nature's hand amass'd  
 Can vie with all those moods of varying grace  
 Which o'er one loveliest woman's form and face  
 Within this hour, within this room, have pass'd?  
 Love's very vesture and elect disguise  
 Was each fine movement,—wonder new-begot  
 Of lily or swan or swan-stemmed galiot;  
 Joy to his sight who now the sadder sighs,  
 Parted again, and sorrow yet for eyes  
 Unborn, that read these words and saw her not.

#### XVIII. GENIUS IN BEAUTY

BEAUTY like hers is genius. Not the call  
 Of Homer's or of Dante's heart sublime,—  
 Not Michael's hand furrowing the zones of time,—  
 Is more with compassed mysteries musical;  
 Nay, not in Spring's or Summer's sweet footfall  
 More gathered gifts exuberant Life bequeathes  
 Than doth this sovereign face, whose love-spell breathes  
 Even from its shadowed contour on the wall.  
 As many men are poets in their youth,  
 But for one sweet-strung soul the wires prolong  
 Even through all change the indomitable song;  
 So in like wise the envenomed year, whose tooth  
 Rends shallower grace with ruin void of ruth,  
 Upon this beauty's power shall wreak no wrong.

#### XIX. SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long, fresh grass,—  
 The finger-points look through like rose blooms;  
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms  
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.  
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,

Are golden kingcup-fields with silver  
edge  
Where the cow-parsley skirts the haw-  
thorn hedge.  
'T is visible silence, still as the hour-  
glass.  
Deep in the sun-searched growths the  
dragon-fly  
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from  
the sky,—  
So this wing'd hour is dropped to us  
from above.  
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for death-  
less dower,  
This close-companioned inarticulate  
hour  
When twofold silence was the song of  
love.

## XXI. LOVE-SWEETNESS

SWEET dimness of her loosened hair's  
downfall  
About thy face; her sweet hands round  
thy head  
In gracious fostering union garlanded;  
Her tremulous smiles; her glances'  
sweet recall  
Of love; her murmuring sighs memo-  
rial;  
Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy  
kisses shed  
On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so  
led  
Back to her mouth, which answers there  
for all:—  
What sweeter than these things, except  
the thing  
In lacking which all these would lose  
their sweet:—  
The confident heart's still fervor: the  
swift beat  
And soft subsidence of the spirit's  
wing,  
Then when it feels, in cloud-girt way-  
faring,  
The breath of kindred plumes against  
its feet?

## XXIV. PRIDE OF YOUTH

EVEN as a child, of sorrow that we give  
The dead, but little in his heart can  
find,  
Since without need of thought to his  
clear mind  
Their turn it is to die and his to live:—  
Even so the winged New Love smiles to  
receive

Along his eddying plumes the auroral  
wind,  
Nor, forward glorying, casts one look  
behind  
Where night-rack shrouds the Old Love  
fugitive.  
There is a change in every hour's recall,  
And the last cowslip in the fields we see  
On the same day with the first corn-  
poppy.  
Alas for hourly change! Alas for all  
The loves that from his hand proud  
Youth lets fall,  
Even as the beads of a told rosary!

## XXVI. MID-RAPTURE

THOU lovely and beloved, thou my love;  
Whose kiss seems still the first; whose  
summoning eyes,  
Even now, as for our love-world's new  
sunrise,  
Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned  
above  
All modulation of the deep-powered  
dove,  
Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;  
Whose hand is like a sweet voice to con-  
trol  
Those worn tired brows it hath the keep-  
ing of:—  
What word can answer to thy word—  
what gaze  
To thine, which now absorbs within its  
sphere  
My worshipping face, till I am mirrored  
there  
Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn  
rays?  
What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart  
can prove,  
O lovely and beloved, O my love?

## XXVII. HEART'S COMPASS

SOMETIMES thou seem'st not as thyself  
alone,  
But as the meaning of all things that  
are;  
A breathless wonder, shadowing forth  
afar  
Some heavenly solstice hushed and hal-  
cyon;  
Whose unstirred lips are music's viable  
tone;  
Whose eyes the sun-gate of the soul  
unbar,  
Being of its furthest fires oracular—  
The evident heart of all life sown and  
mown.

Even such love is; and is not thy name  
Love?  
Yea, by thy hand the Love-god rends  
apart  
All gathering clouds of Night's ambigu-  
ous art;  
Flings them far down, and sets thine  
eyes above;  
And simply, as some gage of flower or  
glove,  
Stakes with a smile the world against  
thy heart.

## XXXI. HER GIFTS

HIGH grace, the dower of queens; and  
therewithal  
Some wood-born wonder's sweet sim-  
plicity;  
A glance like water brimming with the  
sky  
Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows  
fall;  
Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth  
enthral  
The heart; a mouth whose passionate  
forms imply  
All music and all silence held thereby;  
Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal:  
A round reared neck, meet column of  
Love's shrine  
To cling to when the heart takes sanc-  
tuary;  
Hands which for ever at Love's bidding  
be,  
And soft-stirred feet still answering to  
his sign:—  
These are her gifts, as tongue may tell  
them o'er.  
Breathe low her name, my soul; for  
that means more.

## XXXII. EQUAL TROTH

NOT by one measure mayst thou mete  
our love:  
For how should I be loved as I love thee?—  
I, graceless, joyless, lacking absolutely  
All gifts that with thy queenship best  
behave:—  
Thou, throned in every heart's elect al-  
cove,  
And crowned with garlands culled from  
every tree,  
Which for no head but thine, by Love's  
decree,  
All beauties and all mysteries interwove.  
But here thine eyes and lips yield soft  
rebuke:—

"Then only," (say'st thou) "could I  
love thee less,  
When thou couldst doubt my love's  
equality."  
Peace, sweet! If not to sum but worth  
we look,  
Thy heart's transcendence, not my heart's  
excess,—  
Then more a thousandfold thou lov'st  
than I.

## XXXIII. VENUS VICTRIX

COULD Juno's self more sovereign pres-  
ence wear  
Than thou, 'mid other ladies throned  
in grace?—  
Or Pallas, when thou bend'st with soul-  
stilled face  
O'er poet's page gold-shadowed in thy  
hair?  
Dost thou than Venus seem less heavenly  
fair  
When o'er the sea of love's tumultuous  
trance  
Hovers thy smile, and mingles with  
thy glance  
That sweet voice like the last wave mur-  
muring there?  
Before such triune loveliness divine  
Awestruck I ask, which goddess here  
most claims  
The prize that, howsoe'er adjudged, is  
thine?  
Then Love breathes low the sweetest of  
thy names;  
And Venus Victrix to my heart doth  
bring  
Herself, the Helen of her guerdoning.

## XXXIV. THE DARK GLASS

NOT I myself know all my love for thee:  
How should I reach so far, who cannot  
weigh  
To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?  
Shall birth and death, and all dark names  
that be  
As doors and windows bared to some  
loud sea,  
Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face  
with spray;  
And shall my sense pierce love,—the  
last relay  
And ultimate outpost of eternity?  
Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?  
One murmuring shell he gathers from  
the sand,  
One little heart-flame sheltered in his  
hand.

Yet through thine eyes he grants me  
clearest call  
And veriest touch of powers primordial  
That any hour-girt life may understand.

XL. SEVERED SELVES

TWO separate divided silences,  
Which, brought together, would find  
loving voice;  
Two glances which together would re-  
joice  
In love, now lost like stars beyond dark  
trees;  
Two hands apart whose touch alone gives  
ease;  
Two bosoms which, heart-shrined with  
mutual flame,  
Would, meeting in one clasp, be made  
the same:  
Two souls, the shores wave-mocked of  
sundering seas:—  
Such are we now. Ah! may our hope  
forecast  
Indeed one hour again, when on this  
stream  
Of darkened love once more the light  
shall gleam?—  
An hour how slow to come, how quickly  
past,—  
Which blooms and fades, and only leaves  
at last,  
Faint as shed flowers, the attenuated  
dream.

XLI. THROUGH DEATH TO LOVE

LIKE labor-laden moonclouds faint to flee  
From winds that sweep the winter-  
bitten wold,—  
Like multiform circumfluence manifold  
Of night's flood-tide,—like terrors that  
agree  
Of hoarse-tongued fire and inarticulate  
sea,—  
Even such, within some glass dimmed  
by our breath,  
Our hearts discern wild images of Death,  
Shadows and shoals that edge eternity.  
Howbeit athwart Death's imminent  
shade doth soar  
One Power, than flow of stream or flight  
of dove  
Sweeter to glide around, to brood above.  
Tell me, my heart,—what angel-greeted  
door  
Or threshold of wing-winnowed thresh-  
ing-floor  
Hath guest fire-fledged as thine, whose  
lord is Love?

XLVIII. DEATH-IN-LOVE

THERE came an image in Life's retinue  
That had Love's wings and bore his  
gonfalon:  
Fair was the web, and nobly wrought  
thereon,  
O soul-sequestered face, thy form and  
hue!  
Bewildering sounds, such as Spring  
wakens to,  
Shook in its folds; and through my  
heart its power  
Sped trackless as the immemorable hour  
When birth's dark portal groaned and  
all was new.  
But a veiled woman followed, and she  
caught  
The banner round its staff, to furl and  
cling,—  
Then plucked a feather from the bearer's  
wing,  
And held it to his lips that stirred it not,  
And said to me, "Behold, there is no  
breath:  
I and this Love are one, and I am Death."

XLIX. WILLOWWOOD—I

I SAT with Love upon a woodside well,  
Leaning across the water, I and he;  
Nor ever did he speak nor looked at me,  
But touched his lute wherein was audible  
The certain secret thing he had to tell:  
Only our mirrored eyes met silently  
In the low wave; and that sound came  
to be  
The passionate voice I knew; and my  
tears fell.  
And at their fall, his eyes beneath grew  
hers;  
And with his foot and with his wing-  
feathers  
He swept the spring that watered my  
heart's drouth.  
Then the dark ripples spread to waving  
hair,  
And as I stooped, her own lips rising  
there  
Bubbled with brimming kisses at my  
mouth.

L. WILLOWWOOD—II

AND now Love sang: but his was such  
a song.  
So meshed with half-remembrance hard  
to free,  
As souls disused in death's sterility  
May sing when the new birthday tarries  
long.

And I was made aware of a dumb throng  
That stood aloof, one form by every tree,  
All mournful forms, for each was I or she,  
The shades of those our days that had  
no tongue.

They looked on us, and knew us and  
were known ;

While fast together, alive from the abyss,  
Clung the soul-wrung implacable close  
kiss ;

And pity of self through all made  
broken moan

Which said, "For once, for once, for  
once alone !"

And still Love sang, and what he sang  
was this :—

#### LII. WILLOWWOOD—III

"O YE, all ye that walk in Willowwood,  
That walk with hollow faces burning  
white ;

What fathom-depth of soul-struck  
widowhood,

What long, what longer hours, one life-  
long night,

Ere ye again, who so in vain have wooed  
Your last hope lost, who so in vain invite  
Your lips to that their unforgotten food,

Ere ye, ere ye again shall see the light !  
Alas ! the bitter banks in Willowwood,

With tear-spurge wan, with blood-wort  
burning red :

Alas ! if ever such a pillow could  
Steep deep the soul in sleep till she were  
dead,—

Better all life forget her than this thing,  
That Willowwood should hold her wan-  
dering !"

#### LIII. WILLOWWOOD—IV

So sang he : and as meeting rose and  
rose

Together cling through the wind's well-  
away

Nor change at once, yet near the end of  
day

The leaves drop loosened where the  
heart-stain glows,—

So when the song died did the kiss un-  
close ;

And her face fell back drowned, and was  
as gray

As its gray eyes ; and if it ever may  
Meet mine again I know not if Love  
knows.

Only I know that I leaned low and drank  
A long draught from the water where  
she sank.

Her breath and all her tears and all her  
soul :

And as I leaned, I know I felt Love's  
face

Pressed on my neck with moan of pity  
and grace,

Till both our heads were in his aureole.

#### LIII. WITHOUT HER

WHAT of her glass without her ? The  
blank gray

There where the pool is blind of the  
moon's face.

Her dress without her ? The tossed  
empty space

Of cloud-rack whence the moon has  
passed away.

Her paths without her ? Day's appointed  
sway

Usurped by desolate night. Her pil-  
lowed place

Without her ? Tears, ah me ! for love's  
good grace,

And cold forgetfulness of night or day.  
What of the heart without her ? Nay,

poor heart,  
Of thee what word remains ere speech  
be still ?

A wayfarer by barren ways and chill,  
Steep ways and weary, without her thou  
art,

Where the long cloud, the long wood's  
counterpart,

Sheds doubled darkness up the laboring  
hill.

#### LV. STILLBORN LOVE

THE hour which might have been yet  
might not be,

Which man's and woman's heart con-  
ceived and bore

Yet whereof life was barren,—on what  
shore

Bides it the breaking of Time's weary  
sea ?

Bondchild of all consummate joys set  
free,

It somewhere sighs and serves, and  
mute before

The house of Love, hears through the  
echoing door

His hours elect in choral consonancy.  
But lo ! what wedded souls now hand in

hand  
Together tread at last the immortal  
strand

With eyes where burning memory lights  
love home ?

Lo! how the little outcast hour has  
turned  
And leaped to them and in their faces  
yearned :—  
“I am your child : O parents, ye have  
come !”

LVI. TRUE WOMAN—I. HERSELF

To be a sweetness more desired than  
Spring ;  
A bodily beauty more acceptable  
Than the wild rose-tree's arch that  
crowns the fell ;  
To be an essence more environing  
Than wine's drained juice ; a music  
ravishing  
More than the passionate pulse of Phil-  
omel ;—  
To be all this 'neath one soft bosom's  
swell  
That is the flower of life :—how strange  
a thing !  
How strange a thing to be what Man  
can know  
But as a sacred secret ! Heaven's own  
screen  
Hides her soul's purest depth and loveliest  
glow ;  
Closely withheld, as all things most un-  
seen,—  
The wave-bowered pearl,—the heart-  
shaped seal of green  
That flecks the snowdrop underneath the  
snow.

LVII. TRUE WOMAN—II. HER LOVE

SHE loves him ; for her infinite soul is  
Love,  
And he her lodestar. Passion in her is  
A glass facing his fire, where the bright  
bliss  
Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet  
move  
That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to  
prove,  
And it shall turn, by instant contraries,  
Ice to the moon ; while her pure fire to  
his  
For whom it burns, clings close i' the  
heart's alcove.  
Lo! they are one. With wifely breast  
to breast  
And circling arms, she welcomes all  
command  
Of love,—her soul to answering ardors  
fann'd :  
Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to  
rest,

Ah! who shall say she deems not love-  
liest  
The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand ?

LVIII. TRUE WOMAN—III. HER HEAVEN

If to grow old in Heaven is to grow  
young,  
(As the Seer saw and said,) then blest  
were he  
With youth for evermore, whose heaven  
should be  
True Woman, she whom these weak  
notes have sung,  
Here and hereafter,—choir-strains of her  
tongue,—  
Sky-spaces of her eyes,—sweet signs  
that flee  
About her soul's immediate sanctuary,—  
Were Paradise all uttermost worlds  
among,  
The sunrise blooms and withers on the  
hill  
Like any hillflower ; and the noblest  
troth  
Dies here to dust. Yet shall Heaven's  
promise clothe  
Even yet those lovers who have cherished  
still  
This test for love :—in every kiss sealed  
fast  
To feel the first kiss and forbode the last.

LIX. LOVE'S LAST GIFT

LOVE to his singer held a glistening leaf,  
And said : “ The rose-tree and the apple-  
tree  
Have fruits to vaunt or flowers to lure  
the bee ;  
And golden shafts are in the feathered  
sheaf  
Of the great harvest-marshal, the year's  
chief,  
Victorious Summer ; aye, and 'neath  
warm sea  
Strange secret grasses lurk inviolably  
Between the filtering channels of sunk  
reef.  
All are my blooms ; and all sweet blooms  
of love  
To thee I gave while Spring and Summer  
sang ;  
But Autumn stops to listen, with some  
pang  
From those worse things the wind is  
moaning of.  
Only this laurel dreads no winter days :  
Take my last gift ; thy heart hath sung  
my praise.”

## PART II. CHANGE AND FATE

## LX. TRANSFIGURED LIFE

As growth of form or momentary glance  
 In a child's features will recall to mind  
 The father's with the mother's face combin'd,—  
 Sweet interchange that memories still enhance:  
 And yet, as childhood's years and youth's advance,  
 The gradual mouldings leave one stamp behind,  
 Till in the blended likeness now we find  
 A separate man's or woman's countenance :—  
 So in the Song, the singer's Joy and Pain,  
 Its very parents, evermore expand  
 To bid the passion's fullgrown birth remain,  
 By Art's transfiguring essence subtly spann'd;  
 And from that song-cloud shaped as a man's hand  
 There comes the sound as of abundant rain.

## LXI. THE SONG—THROE

By thine own tears thy song must tears beget,  
 O Singer! Magic mirror thou hast none  
 Except thy manifest heart; and save thine own  
 Anguish or ardor, else no amulet.  
 Cisterned in Pride, verse is the feathery jet  
 Of soulless air-flung fountains; nay, more dry  
 Than the Dead Sea for throats that thirst and sigh,  
 That song o'er which no singer's lids grew wet.  
 The Song-god—He the Sun-god—is no slave  
 Of thine: thy Hunter he, who for thy soul  
 Fledges his shaft: to no august control  
 Of thy skilled hand his quivered store he gave:  
 But if thy lips' loud cry leap to his smart,  
 The inspir'd recoil shall pierce thy brother's heart.

## LXV. KNOWN IN VAIN

As two whose love, first foolish, widening scope,  
 Knows suddenly, to music high and soft,

The Holy of holies; who because they scoff'd  
 Are now amazed with shame, nor dare to cope  
 With the whole truth aloud, lest heaven should ope:  
 Yet, at their meetings, laugh not as they laugh'd  
 In speech; nor speak, at length; but sitting oft  
 Together, within hopeless sight of hope  
 For hours are silent:—So it happeneth  
 When Work and Will awake too late, to gaze  
 After their life sailed by, and hold their breath.  
 Ah! who shall dare to search through what sad maze  
 Thenceforth their incommunicable ways  
 Follow the desultory feet of Death?

## LXVI. THE HEART OF THE NIGHT

FROM child to youth; from youth to arduous man;  
 From lethargy to fever of the heart;  
 From faithful life to dream-dowered days apart;  
 From trust to doubt; from doubt to brink of ban;—  
 Thus much of change in one swift cycle ran  
 Till now. Alas, the soul!—how soon must she  
 Accept her primal immortality,—  
 The flesh resume its dust whence it began?  
 O Lord of work and peace! O Lord of life!  
 O Lord, the awful Lord of will! though late,  
 Even yet renew this soul with duteous breath:  
 That when the peace is garnered in from strife,  
 The work retrieved, the will regenerate,  
 This soul may see thy face, O Lord of death!

## LXVII. THE LANDMARK

WAS *that* the landmark? What—the foolish well  
 Whose wave, low down, I did not stoop to drink,  
 But sat and flung the pebbles from its brink  
 In sport to send its imaged skies pell-mell,

(And mine own image, had I noted  
well!)—  
Was that my point of turning?—I had  
thought  
The stations of my course should rise un-  
sought,  
As altar-stone or ensigned citadel.  
But lo! the path is missed, I must go  
back,  
And thirst to drink when next I reach  
the spring  
Which once I stained, which since may  
have grown black.  
Yet though no light be left nor bird now  
sing  
As here I turn, I'll thank God, hasten-  
ing,  
That the same goal is still on the same  
track.

LXX. THE HILL SUMMIT

THIS feast-day of the sun, his altar there  
In the broad west has blazed for vesper-  
song ;  
And I have loitered in the vale too long  
And gaze now a belated worshipper.  
Yet may I not forget that I was 'ware,  
So journeying, of his face at intervals  
Transfigured where the fringed horizon  
falls,—  
A fiery bush with coruscating hair.  
And now that I have climbed and won  
this height,  
I must tread downward through the  
sloping shade  
And travel the bewildered tracks till  
night.  
Yet for this hour I still may here be  
stayed  
And see the gold air and the silver fade  
And the last bird fly into the last light.

LXXI. THE CHOICE—I

EAT thou and drink ; to-morrow thou  
shalt die.  
Surely the earth, that's wise being very  
old,  
Needs not our help. Then loose me,  
love, and hold  
Thy sultry hair up from my face ; that I  
May pour for thee this golden wine,  
brim-high,  
Till round the glass thy fingers glow  
like gold.  
We'll drown all hours : thy song, while  
hours are toll'd,  
Shall leap, as fountains veil the chang-  
ing sky.

Now kiss, and think that there are really  
those,  
My own high-bosomed beauty, who  
increase  
Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might  
choose our way !  
Through many years they toil ; then on  
a day  
They die not,—for their life was death,  
—but cease ;  
And round their narrow lips the mould  
falls close.

LXXII. THE CHOICE—II

WATCH thou and fear ; to-morrow thou  
shalt die.  
Or art thou sure thou shalt have time  
for death ?  
Is not the day which God's word promis-  
eth  
To come man knows not when ? In  
yonder sky,  
Now while we speak, the sun speeds  
forth : can I  
Or thou assure him of his goal ? God's  
breath  
Even at this moment haply quickeneth  
The air to a flame ; till spirits, always  
nigh  
Though screened and hid, shall walk  
the daylight here.  
And dost thou prate of all that man  
shall do ?  
Canst thou, who hast but plagues, pre-  
sume to be  
Glad in his gladness that comes after  
thee ?  
Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell ?  
Go to :  
Cover thy countenance, and watch, and  
fear.

LXXIII. THE CHOICE—III

THINK thou and act ; to-morrow thou  
shalt die.  
Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon  
the shore,  
Thou say'st : " Man's measured path is  
all gone o'er :  
Up all his years, steeply, with strain  
and sigh,  
Man clomb until he touched the truth ;  
and I,  
Even I, am he whom it was destined  
for."  
How should this be ? Art thou then so  
much more



Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst  
reap thereby?  
Nay, come up hither. From this wave-  
washed mound  
Unto the furthest flood-brim look with  
me;  
Then reach on with thy thought till it be  
drown'd.  
Miles and miles distant though the last  
line be,  
And though thy soul sail leagues and  
leagues beyond,—  
Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there  
is more sea.

## LXXIV. OLD AND NEW ART—I

ST. LUKE THE PAINTER

GIVE honor unto Luke Evangelist;  
For he it was (the aged legends say)  
Who first taught Art to fold her hands  
and pray.  
Scarcely at once she dared to rend the  
mist  
Of devious symbols; but soon having  
wist  
How sky-breadth and field-silence and  
this day  
Are symbols also in some deeper way,  
She looked through these to God and  
was God's priest.  
And if, past noon, her toil began to irk,  
And she sought talismans, and turned  
in vain  
To soulless self-reflections of man's  
skill,—  
Yet now, in this the twilight, she might  
still  
Kneel in the latter grass to pray again,  
Ere the night cometh and she may not  
work.

## LXXV. OLD AND NEW ART—II

NOT AS THESE

"I AM not as these are," the poet saith  
In youth's pride, and the painter, among  
men  
At bay, where never pencil comes nor  
pen,  
And shut about with his own frozen  
breath.  
To others, for whom only rhyme wins  
faith  
As poets,—only paint as painters,—then  
He turns in the cold silence; and again  
Shrinking, "I am not as these are," he  
saith.  
And say that this is so, what follows it?

For were thine eyes set backwards in  
thine head,  
Such words were well; but they see on,  
and far.  
Unto the lights of the great Past, new-lit  
Fair for the Future's track, look thou  
instead,—  
Say thou instead, "I am not as *these*  
are."

## LXXVI. OLD AND NEW ART—III

THE HUSBANDMAN

THOUGH God, as one that is an house-  
holder,  
Called these to labor in his vineyard first,  
Before the husk of darkness was well  
burst  
Bidding them grope their way out and  
bestir,  
(Who, questioned of their wages, answered, "Sir,  
Unto each man a penny:") though the  
worst  
Burthen of heat was theirs and the dry  
thirst  
Though God hath since found none such  
as these were  
To do their work like them:—Because  
of this  
Stand not ye idle in the market-place.  
Which of ye knoweth *he* is not that last  
Who may be first by faith and will?—  
yea, his  
The hand which after the appointed  
days  
And hours shall give a Future to their  
Past?

## LXXVII. SOUL'S BEAUTY

(Sibylla Palmifera)

UNDER the arch of Life, where love and  
death,  
Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I  
saw  
Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze  
struck awe,  
I drew it in as simply as my breath.  
Hers are the eyes which, over and  
beneath,  
The sky and sea bend on thee,—which  
can draw,  
By sea or sky or woman, to one law,  
The allotted bondman of her palm and  
wreath.  
This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise  
Thy voice and hand shake still;—long  
known to thee

By flying hair and fluttering hem,—the  
beat  
Following her daily of thy heart and  
feet,  
How passionately and irretrievably,  
In what fond flight, how many ways  
and days!

## LXXXVIII. BODY'S BEAUTY

(Lilith)

OF Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told  
(The witch he loved before the gift of  
Eve.)  
That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue  
could deceive,  
And her enchanted hair was the first  
gold.  
And still she sits, young while the earth  
is old,  
And, subtly of herself contemplative,  
Draws men to watch the bright web  
she can weave.  
Till heart and body and life are in its  
hold.  
The rose and poppy are her flowers; for  
where  
Is he not found, O Lilith, whom shed  
scent  
And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall  
snare?  
Lo! as that youth's eyes burned at  
thine, so went  
Thy spell through him, and left his  
straight neck bent  
And round his heart one strangling  
golden hair.

## LXXXI. MEMORIAL THRESHOLDS

WHAT place so strange,—though unre-  
vealed snow  
With unimaginable fires arise  
At the earth's end,—what passion of  
surprise  
Like frost-bound fire-girt scenes of long  
ago?  
Lo! this is none but I this hour; and lo!  
This is the very place which to mine  
eyes  
Those mortal hours in vain immortalize.  
'Mid hurrying crowds, with what alone  
I know.  
City, of thine a single simple door,  
By some new Power reduplicate, must  
be  
Even yet my life-porch in eternity,  
Even with one presence filled, as once  
of yore:

Or mocking winds whirl round a chaff-  
strown floor  
Thee and thy years and these my words  
and me.

## LXXXII. HOARDED JOY

I SAID: "Nay, pluck not,—let the first  
fruit be;  
Even as thou sayest, it is sweet and red,  
But let it ripen still. The tree's bent  
head  
Sees in the stream its own fecundity  
And bides the day of fulness. Shall  
not we  
At the sun's hour that day possess the  
shade,  
And claim our fruit before its ripeness  
fade,  
And eat it from the branch and praise  
the tree?"  
I say: "Alas! our fruit hath wooed the  
sun  
Too long,—'t is fallen and floats adown  
the stream.  
Lo, the last clusters! Pluck them  
every one,  
And let us sup with summer; ere the  
gleam  
Of autumn set the year's pent sorrow  
free,  
And the woods wail like echoes from  
the sea."

## LXXXIII. BARREN SPRING

ONCE more the changed year's turning  
wheel returns:  
And as a girl sails balanced in the wind,  
And now before and now again behind  
Stoops as it swoops, with cheek that  
laughs and burns,—  
So Spring comes merry towards me here,  
but earns  
No answering smile from me, whose life  
is twin'd  
With the dead boughs that winter still  
must bind,  
And whom to-day the Spring no more  
concerns.  
Behold, this crocus is a withering flame;  
This snowdrop, snow; this apple-blos-  
som's part  
To breed the fruit that breeds the ser-  
pent's art.  
Nay, for these Spring-flowers, turn thy  
face from them,  
Nor stay till on the year's last lily-stem  
The white cup shrivels round the golden  
heart.

## LXXXIV. FAREWELL TO THE GLEN

SWEET stream-fed glen, why say "farewell" to thee  
 Who far'st so well and find'st for ever smooth  
 The brow of Time where man may read no ruth?  
 Nay, do thou rather say "farewell" to me,  
 Who now fare forth in bitterer fantasy  
 Than erst was mine where other shade might soothe  
 By other streams, what while in fragrant youth  
 The bliss of being sad made melancholy.  
 And yet, farewell! For better shalt thou fare  
 When children bathe sweet faces in thy flow  
 And happy lovers blend sweet shadows there  
 In hours to come, than when an hour ago  
 Thine echoes had but one man's sighs to bear  
 And thy trees whispered what he feared to know.

## LXXXVI. LOST DAYS

THE lost days of my life until to-day,  
 What were they, could I see them on the street  
 Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat  
 Sown once for food but trodden into clay?  
 Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?  
 Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?  
 Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat  
 The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?  
 I do not see them here; but after death  
 God knows I know the faces I shall see,  
 Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.  
 "I am thyself,—what hast thou done to me?"  
 "And I—and I—thyself," (lo! each one saith,)  
 "And thou thyself to all eternity!"

## LXXXIX. THE TREES OF THE GARDEN

YE who have passed Death's haggard hills; and ye

Whom trees that knew your sires shall cease to know  
 And still stand silent:—is it all a show,—  
 A wisp that laughs upon the wall?—decree  
 Of some inexorable supremacy  
 Which ever, as man strains his blind surmise  
 From depth to ominous depth, looks past his eyes,  
 Sphinx-faced with unabashed augury?  
 Nay, rather question the Earth's self.  
 Invoke  
 The storm-felled forest-trees moss-grown to-day  
 Whose roots are hillocks where the children play;  
 Or ask the silver sapling 'neath what yoke  
 Those stars, his spray-crown's clustering gems, shall wage  
 Their journey still when his boughs shrink with age.

## XC. "RETRO ME, SATHANA!"

GET thee behind me. Even as, heavy-curved,  
 Stooping against the wind, a charioteer  
 Is snatched from out his chariot by the hair,  
 So shall Time be; and as the void car, hurled  
 Abroad by reinless steeds, even so the world:  
 Yea, even as chariot-dust upon the air,  
 It shall be sought and not found anywhere.  
 Get thee behind me, Satan. Oft unfurled,  
 Thy perilous wings can beat and break like lath  
 Much mightiness of men to win thee praise.  
 Leave these weak feet to tread in narrow ways.  
 Thou still, upon the broad vine-sheltered path,  
 Mayst wait the turning of the phials of wrath  
 For certain years, for certain months and days.

## XCI. LOST ON BOTH SIDES

As when two men have loved a woman well,  
 Each hating each, through Love's and Death's deceit;

Since not for either this stark marriage-sheet  
And the long pauses of this wedding-bell;  
Yet o'er her grave the night and day dispel  
At last their feud forlorn, with cold and heat  
Nor other than dear friends to death may fleet  
The two lives left that most of her can tell :—  
So separate hopes, which in a soul had wooed  
The one same Peace, strove with each other long.  
And Peace before their faces perished since :  
So through that soul, in restless brotherhood,  
They roam together now, and wind among  
Its bye-streets, knocking at the dusty inns.

XCIV. MICHELANGELO'S KISS

GREAT Michelangelo, with age grown bleak  
And uttermost labors, having once o'er-said  
All grievous memories on his long life shed,  
This worst regret to one true heart could speak :—  
That when, with sorrowing love and reverence meek,  
He stooped o'er sweet Colonna's dying bed,  
His Muse and dominant Lady, spirit-wed,—  
Her hand he kissed, but not her brow or cheek.  
O Buonarrotti, — good at Art's fire-wheels  
To urge her chariot!—even thus the Soul,  
Touching at length some sorely-chastened goal,  
Earns oftenest but a little: her appeals  
Were deep and mute,—lowly her claim.  
Let be :  
What holds for her Death's garner?  
And for thee?

XCVI. LIFE THE BELOVED

As thy friend's face, with shadow of soul  
o'er-spread, [bath been  
Somewhile unto thy sight perchance

Ghastly and strange, yet never so is seen  
In thought, but to all fortunate favor wed;  
As thy love's death-bound features never dead  
To memory's glass return, but contravene  
Frail fugitive days, and alway keep. I ween,  
Than all new life a livelier lovelihead :—  
So Life herself, thy spirit's friend and love,  
Even still as Spring's authentic har-binger  
Glow with fresh hours for hope to glorify;  
Though pale she lay when in the winter grove  
Her funeral flowers were snow-flakes shed on her  
And the red wings of frost-fire rent the sky.

XCVII. A SUPERScription

LOOK in my face; my name is Might-have-been;  
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Fare-well;  
Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell  
Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;  
Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen  
Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell  
Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,  
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.  
Mark me, how still I am! But should there dart  
One moment through thy soul the soft surprise  
Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—  
Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart  
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart  
Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

XCIX. NEWBORN DEATH—I

TO-DAY Death seems to me an infant child  
Which her worn mother Life upon my knee  
Hasset to grow my friend and play with me :  
If haply so my heart might be beguiled  
To find no terrors in a face so mild,—

If haply so my weary heart might be  
 Unto the newborn milky eyes of thee,  
 O Death, before resentment reconcil'd.  
 How long, O Death? And shall thy feet  
 depart  
 Still a young child's with mine, or wilt  
 thou stand  
 Fullgrown the helpful daughter of my  
 heart,  
 What time with thee indeed I reach the  
 strand  
 Of the pale wave which knows thee  
 what thou art,  
 And drink it in the hollow of thy hand?

## C. NEWBORN DEATH—II

AND thou, O Life, the lady of all bliss,  
 With whom, when our first heart beat  
 full and fast,  
 I wandered till the haunts of men were  
 pass'd,  
 And in fair places found all bowers amiss  
 Till only woods and waves might hear  
 our kiss,  
 While to the winds all thought of Death  
 we cast:—  
 Ah, Life! and must I have from thee at  
 last  
 No smile to greet me and no babe but  
 this?  
 Lo! Love, the child once ours; and  
 Song, whose hair  
 Blew like a flame and blossomed like a  
 wreath;  
 And Art, whose eyes were worlds by  
 God found fair;  
 These o'er the book of Nature mixed their  
 breath  
 With neck-twined arms, as oft we  
 watched them there:  
 And did these die that thou mightst  
 bear me Death?

## CI. THE ONE HOPE

WHEN vain desire at last and vain re-  
 gret  
 Go hand in hand to death, and all is  
 vain,  
 What shall assuage the unforgetten pain  
 And teach the unforgetful to forget?  
 Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long  
 unmet,—  
 Or may the soul at once in a green plain  
 Stoop through the spray of some sweet  
 life-fountain  
 And cull the dew-drenched flowering  
 amulet?

Ah! when the wan soul in that golden  
 air  
 Between the scripted petals softly  
 blown  
 Peers breathless for the gift of grace  
 unknown,  
 Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er  
 But only the one Hope's one name be  
 there,—  
 Not less nor more, but even that word  
 alone. 1869, 1870, 1881.<sup>1</sup>

## THE CLOUD CONFINES

THE day is dark and the night  
 To him that would search their heart;  
 No lips of cloud that will part  
 Nor morning song in the light:  
 Only, gazing alone,  
 To him wild shadows are shown,  
 Deep under deep unknown  
 And height above unknown height.

Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."

The Past is over and fled;  
 Named new, we name it the old;  
 Thereof some tale hath been told,  
 But no word comes from the dead;  
 Whether at all they be,  
 Or whether as bond or free,  
 Or whether they too were we,  
 Or by what spell they have sped.

Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of hate  
 That beats in thy breast, O Time?—  
 Red strife from the furthest prime,  
 And anguish of fierce debate;  
 War that shatters her slain,  
 And peace that grinds them as grain,  
 And eyes fixed ever in vain  
 On the pitiless eyes of Fate.

Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,

<sup>1</sup> Sixteen Sonnets, Numbers 25, 39, 47, 49-52, 62, 65, 67, 86, 91, 97, 99, and 100, were published in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1869. Fifty Sonnets (for the exact list see W. M. Rossetti's edition of the *Collected Works*, I, 517) were published, with eleven lyrics, as "Sonnets and Songs towards a work to be entitled *The House of Life*," in the *Poems*, 1870. *The House of Life*, as it now stands, consisting of sonnets only, was published in *Ballads and Sonnets*, 1881.

Whatever there is to know,  
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of love  
That bleeds in thy breast, O Man?  
Thy kisses snatched 'neath the ban  
Of fangs that mock them above:  
Thy bells prolonged unto knells,  
Thy hope that a breath dispels,  
Thy bitter forlorn farewells  
And the empty echoes thereof?

Still we say as we go,—  
"Strange to think by the way,  
Whatever there is to know,  
That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,  
A weary with all its wings;  
And oh! the song the sea sings  
Is dark everlastingly.

Our past is clean forgot,  
Our present is and is not,  
Our future's a sealed seedplot,  
And what betwixt them are we?—

We who say as we go,—  
"Strange to think by the way,  
Whatever there is to know,  
That shall we know one day."  
1872.

### THREE SHADOWS

I LOOKED and saw your eyes  
In the shadow of your hair,  
As a traveller sees the stream  
In the shadow of the wood;  
And I said, "My faint heart sighs,  
Ah me! to linger there,  
To drink deep and to dream  
In that sweet solitude."

I looked and saw your heart  
In the shadow of your eyes,  
As a seeker sees the gold  
In the shadow of the stream;  
And I said, "Ah me? what art  
Should win the immortal prize,  
Whose want must make life cold  
And Heaven a hollow dream?"

I looked and saw your love  
In the shadow of your heart,  
As a diver sees the pearl  
In the shadow of the sea;  
And I murmured, not above  
My breath, but all apart,—  
"Ah! you can love, true girl,  
And is your love for me?"  
1881.

### INSOMNIA

THIN are the night-skirts left behind  
By daybreak hours that onward creep,  
And thin, alas! the shred of sleep  
That wavers with the spirit's wind:  
But in half-dreams that shift and roll  
And still remember and forget,  
My soul this hour has drawn your soul  
A little nearer yet.

Our lives, most dear, are never near,  
Our thoughts are never far apart,  
Though all that draws us heart to heart  
Seems fainter now and now more clear.  
To-night Love claims his full control,  
And with desire and with regret  
My soul this hour has drawn your soul  
A little nearer yet.

Is there a home where heavy earth  
Melts to bright air that breathes no  
pain,  
Where water leaves no thirst again  
And springing fire is Love's new birth?  
If faith long bound to one true goal  
May there at length its hope beget,  
My soul that hour shall draw your soul  
For ever nearer yet. 1881.

### CHIMES

#### I

Honey-flowers to the honey-comb  
And the honey-bees from home.

A honey-comb and a honey-flower,  
And the bee shall have his hour.

A honeyed heart for the honey-comb,  
And the humming bee flies home.

A heavy heart in the honey-flower,  
And the bee has had his hour.

#### II

A honey-cell's in the honeysuckle,  
And the honey-bee knows it well.

The honey-comb has a heart of honey,  
And the humming bee 's so bonny.

A honey-flower 's the honeysuckle,  
And the bee 's in the honey-bell.

The honeysuckle is sucked of honey,  
And the bee is heavy and bonny.

## III

Brown shell first for the butterfly  
And a bright wing by and by.

Butterfly, good-by to your shell,  
And, bright wings, speed you well.

Bright lamplight for the butterfly  
And a burnt wing by and by.

Butterfly, alas for your shell,  
And, bright wings, fare you well.

## IV

Lost love-labor and lullaby,  
And lowly let love lie.

Lost love-morrow and love-fellow  
And love's life lying low.

Lovelorn labor and life laid by  
And lowly let love lie.

Late love-longing and life-sorrow  
And love's life lying low.

## V

Beauty's body and benison  
With a bosom-flower new-blown.

Bitter beauty and blessing bann'd  
With a breast to burn and brand.

Beauty's bower in the dust o'erblown  
With a bare white breast of bone.

Barren beauty and bower of sand  
With a blast on either hand.

## VI

Buried bars in the breakwater  
And bubble of the brimming weir.

Body's blood in the breakwater  
And a buried body's bier.

Buried bones in the breakwater  
And bubble of the brawling weir.

Bitter tears in the breakwater  
And a breaking heart to bear.

## VII

Hollow heaven and the hurricane  
And hurry of the heavy rain.

Hurried clouds in the hollow heaven  
And a heavy rain hard-driven.

The heavy rain it hurries amain  
And heaven and the hurricane.

Hurrying wind o'er the heaven's hollow  
And the heavy rain to follow. 1881.

## SOOTHSAY

LET no man ask thee of anything  
Not yearborn between Spring and  
Spring.

More of all worlds than he can know,  
Each day the single sun doth show.  
A trustier gloss than thou canst give  
From all wise scrolls demonstrative,  
The sea doth sigh and the wind sing.

Let no man awe thee on any height  
Of earthly kingship's mouldering might.  
The dust his heel holds meet for thy  
brow

Hath all of it been what both are now;  
And thou and he may plague together  
A beggar's eyes in some dusty weather  
When none that is now knows sound or  
sight.

Crave thou no dower of earthly things  
Unworthy Hope's imaginings.  
To have brought true birth of Song to be  
And to have won hearts to Poesy,  
Or anywhere in the sun or rain  
To have loved and been beloved again,  
Is loftiest reach of Hope's bright wings.

The wild waifs cast up by the sea  
Are diverse ever seasonably.  
Even so the soul-tides still may land  
A different drift upon the sand.  
But one the sea is evermore:  
And one be still, 'twixt shore and shore,  
As the sea's life, thy soul in thee.

Say, hast thou pride? How then may fit  
Thy mood with flatterer's silk-spun wit?  
Haply the sweet voice lifts thy crest,  
A breeze of fame made manifest.  
Nay, but then chaf'st at flattery? Pause:  
Be sure thy wrath is not because  
It makes thee feel thou lovest it.

Let thy soul strive that still the same  
Be early friendship's sacred flame.  
The affinities have strongest part  
In youth, and draw men heart to heart:  
As life wears on and finds no rest,  
The individual in each breast  
Is tyrannous to sunder them.

In the life-drama's stern cue-call,  
A friend's a part well-prized by all:



And if thou meet an enemy,  
What art thou that none such should be?  
Even so: but if the two parts run  
Into each other and grow one,  
Then comes the curtain's cue to fall.

Whate'er by other's need is claimed  
More than by thine,—to him unblamed  
Resign it: and if he should hold  
What more than he thou lack'st, bread,  
gold,

Or any good whereby we live,—  
To thee such substance let him give  
Freely: nor he nor thou be shamed.

Strive that thy works prove equal: lest  
That work which thou hast done the best  
Should come to be to thee at length  
(Even as to envy seems the strength  
Of others) hateful and abhor'd,—  
Thine own above thyself made lord,—  
Of self-rebuke the bitterest.

Unto the man of yearning thought  
And aspiration, to do nought  
Is in itself almost an act,—  
Being chasm-fire and cataract  
Of the soul's utter depths unscal'd.  
Yet woe to thee if once thou yield  
Unto the act of doing nought!

How callous seems beyond revoke  
The clock with its last listless stroke!  
How much too late at length!—to trace  
The hour on its forewarning face,  
The thing thou hast not dared to do!...  
Behold, this *may* be thus! Ere true  
It prove, arise and bear thy yoke.

Let lore of all Theology  
Be to thy soul what it *can* be:  
But know,—the Power that fashions man  
Measured not out thy little span  
For thee to take the meting-rod  
In turn, and so approve on God  
Thy science of Theometry.

To God at best, to Chance at worst,  
Give thanks for good things, last as first,  
But windstrown blossom is that good  
Whose apple is not gratitude.  
Even if no prayer uplift thy face,  
Let the sweet right to render grace  
As thy soul's cherished child be nurs'd.

Didst ever say, "Lo, I forget?"  
Such thought was to remember yet.  
As in a gravegarth, count to see  
The monuments of memory.

Be this thy soul's appointed scope:—  
Gaze onward without claim to hope,  
Nor, gazing backward, court regret.  
1881.

# ON BURNS

In whomso'er, since Poesy began,  
A Poet most of all men we may scan,  
Burns of all poets is the most a Man.  
1886.

## FIVE ENGLISH POETS

### I. THOMAS CHATTERTON

With Shakespeare's manhood at a boy's  
wild heart,—  
Through Hamlet's doubt to Shakespeare  
near allied,  
And kin to Milton through his Satan's  
pride,—  
At Death's sole door he stooped, and  
craved a dart;  
And to the dear new bower of England's  
art,—  
Even to that shrine Time else had dei-  
fied.  
The untutored heart that soared against  
his side,—  
Drove the fell point, and smote life's  
seals apart.  
Thy nested home-loves, noble Chatter-  
ton;  
The angel-trodden stair thy soul could  
trace  
Up Redcliffe's spire: and in the world's  
armed space  
Thy gallant sword-play:—these to many  
an one  
Are sweet for ever; as thy grave un-  
known  
And love-dream of thine unrecorded  
face.

### II. WILLIAM BLAKE

(To FREDERICK SHIELDS, ON HIS SKETCH OF  
BLAKE'S WORK-ROOM AND DEATH-ROOM, 3 FOUN-  
TAIN COURT, STRAND.)

THIS is the place. Even here the daunt-  
less soul,  
The unflinching hand, wrought on; till  
in that nook,  
As on that very bed, his life partook  
New birth, and passed. Yon river's  
dusky shoal,  
Whereto the close-built coiling lanes  
unroll,  
Faced his work-window, whence his  
eyes would stare,



Thought-wandering, unto nought that  
met them there,  
But to the unfettered irreversible goal.  
This cupboard, Holy of Holies, held the  
cloud  
Of his soul writ and limned; this other  
one,  
His true wife's charge, full oft to their  
abode  
Yielded for daily bread the martyr's  
stone,  
Ere yet their food might be that Bread  
alone,  
The words now home-speech of the  
mouth of God.

### III. SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

His Soul fared forth (as from the deep  
home-grove  
The father-songster plies the hour-long  
quest,)  
To feed his soul-brood hungering in the  
nest;  
But his warm Heart, the mother-bird,  
above  
Their callow fledgling progeny still hove  
With tented roof of wings and fostering  
breast  
Till the Soul fed the soul-brood. Richly  
blest  
From Heaven their growth, whose food  
was Human Love.  
Yet ah! Like desert pools that show  
the stars  
Once in long leagues,—even such the  
scarce-snatched hours  
Which deepening pain left to his lord-  
liest powers:—  
Heaven lost through spider-trammelled  
prison-bars.  
Six years, from sixty saved! Yet kin-  
dling skies  
Own them, a beacon to our centuries.

### IV. JOHN KEATS

THE weltering London ways where chil-  
dren weep  
And girls whom none call maidens  
laugh,—strange road  
Miring his outward steps, who inly  
trode  
The bright Castalian brink and Latmos'  
steep:—  
Even such his life's cross-paths; till  
deathly deep  
He toiled through sands of Lethe; and  
long pain,

Weary with labor spurned and love  
found vain,  
In dead Rome's sheltering shadow wrap-  
ped his sleep.  
O pang-dowered Poet, whose reverber-  
ant lips  
And heart-strung lyre awoke the Moon's  
eclipse,—  
Thou whom the daisies glory in grow-  
ing o'er,—  
Their fragrance clings around thy name,  
not writ  
But rumor'd in water, while the fame  
of it  
Along Time's flood goes echoing ever-  
more.

### V. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

(INSCRIPTION FOR THE COUCH, STILL PRESERVED,  
ON WHICH HE PASSED THE LAST NIGHT OF HIS  
LIFE.)

'TWIXT those twin worlds,—the world of  
Sleep, which gave  
No dream to warm,—the tidal world of  
Death,  
Which the earth's sea, as the earth, re-  
plenisheth,—  
Shelley, Song's orient sun, to breast the  
wave,  
Rose from this couch that morn. Ah!  
did he brave  
Only the sea?—or did man's deed of bell  
Engulf his bark 'mid mists impene-  
trable? . . .  
No eye discerned, nor any power might  
save.  
When that mist cleared, O Shelley!  
what dread veil  
Was rent for thee, to whom far-darkling  
Truth  
Reigned sovereign guide through thy  
brief ageless youth?  
Was the Truth *thy* Truth, Shelley?—  
Hush! All-Hail,  
Past doubt, thou gav'st it; and in  
Truth's bright sphere  
Art first of praisers, being most praised  
here. 1831.

### THE KING'S TRAGEDY

JAMES I OF SCOTS.—20TH FEBRUARY.  
1437.

I CATHERINE am a Douglas born,  
A name to all Scots dear;  
And Kate Barlass they've called me now  
Through many a waning year.

This old arm's withered now. 'T was  
once

Most deft 'mong maidens all  
To rein the steed, to wing the shaft,  
To smite the palm-play ball.

In hall adown the close-linked dance  
It has shone most white and fair ;  
It has been the rest for a true lord's head,  
And many a sweet babe's nursing-bed,  
And the bar to a King's chambère.

Aye, lasses, draw round Kate Barlass,  
And hark with bated breath  
How good King James, King Robert's  
son,  
Was foully done to death.

Through all the days of his gallant youth  
The princely James was pent,  
By his friends at first and then by his  
foes,  
In long imprisonment.

For the elder Prince, the kingdom's heir,  
By treason's murderous brood  
Was slain ; and the father quaked for  
the child  
With the royal mortal blood.

I' the Bass Rock fort, by his father's care,  
Was his childhood's life assured ;  
And Henry the subtle Bolingbroke,  
Proud England's King, 'neath the south-  
ron yoke  
His youth for long years immured.

Yet in all things meet for a kingly man  
Himself did he approve ;  
And the nightingale through his prison-  
wall  
Taught him both lore and love.

For once, when the bird's song drew him  
close  
To the opened window-pane,  
In her bowers beneath a lady stood,  
A light of life to his sorrowful mood,  
Like a lily amid the rain.

And for her sake, to the sweet bird's note,  
He framed a sweeter Song,  
More sweet than ever a poet's heart  
Gave yet to the English tongue.

She was a lady of royal blood ;  
And when, past sorrow and teen,  
He stood where still through his crown-  
less years  
His Scottish realm had been,

At Scone were the happy lovers crowned,  
A heart-wed King and Queen.

But the bird may fall from the bough of  
youth,  
And song be turned to moan,  
And Love's storm-cloud be the shadow  
of Hate,  
When the tempest-waves of a troubled  
State  
Are beating against a throne.

Yet well they loved ; and the god of Love,  
Whom well the King had sung,  
Might find on the earth no truer hearts  
His lowliest swains among.

From the days when first she rode abroad  
With Scottish maids in her train,  
I Catherine Douglas won the trust  
Of my mistress, sweet Queen Jane.

And oft she sighed, "To be born a  
King !"  
And oft along the way  
When she saw the homely lovers pass  
She has said, "Alack the day !"

Years waned,—the loving and toiling  
years :  
Till England's wrong renewed  
Drove James, by outrage cast on his  
crown,  
To the open field of feud.

'T was when the King and his host were  
met  
At the leaguer of Roxbro' hold,  
The Queen o' the sudden sought his camp  
With a tale of dread to be told.

And she showed him a secret letter writ  
That spoke of treasonous strife,  
And how a band of his noblest lords  
Were sworn to take his life.

"And it may be here or it may be there,  
In the camp or the court," she said :  
"But for my sake come to your people's  
arms  
And guard your royal head."

Quoth he, "'T is the fifteenth day of the  
siege,  
And the castle's nigh to yield."  
"O face your foes on your throne," she  
cried,  
"And show the power you wield ;  
And under your Scottish people's love  
You shall sit as under your shield."

At the fair Queen's side I stood that day  
When he bade them raise the siege,  
And back to his Court he sped to know  
How the lords would meet their Liege.

But when he summoned his Parliament,  
The louring brows hung round,  
Like clouds that circle the mountain-head  
Ere the first low thunders sound.

For he had tamed the nobles' lust  
And curbed their power and pride,  
And reached out an arm to right the poor  
Through Scotland far and wide ;  
And many a lordly wrong-doer  
By the headsmen's axe had died.

"T was then upspoke Sir Robert Græme,  
The bold o'er-mastering man :—  
" O King, in the name of your Three  
Estates  
I set you under their ban !

" For, as your lords made oath to you  
Of service and fealty,  
Even in likewise you pledged your oath  
Their faithful sire to be :—

" Yet all we here that are nobly sprung  
Have mourned dear kith and kin  
Since first for the Scottish Barons' curse  
Did your bloody rule begin."

With that he laid his hands on his  
King :—  
" Is this not so, my lords ?"  
But of all who had sworn to league with  
him  
Not one spake back to his words.

Quoth the King :—" Thou speak'st but  
for one Estate,  
Nor doth it avow thy gage.  
Let my liege lords hale this traitor  
hence !"  
The Græme fired dark with rage :—  
" Who works for lesser men than himself,  
He earns but a witless wage !"

But soon from the dungeon where he lay  
He won by privy plots,  
And forth he fled with a price on his  
head  
To the country of the Wild Scots.

And word there came from Sir Robert  
Græme  
To the King at Edinbro' :—

" No Liege of mine thou art ; but I see  
From this day forth alone in thee  
God's creature, my mortal foe.

" Through thee are my wife and children  
lost,  
My heritage and lands ;  
And when my God shall show me a way,  
Thyself my mortal foe will I slay  
With these my proper hands."

Against the coming of Christmastide  
That year the King bade call  
T' the Black Friars' Charterhouse of Perth  
A solemn festival.

And we of his household rode with him  
In a close-ranked company :  
But not till the sun had sunk from his  
throne  
Did we reach the Scottish Sea.

That eve was clenched for a boding storm,  
'Neath a toilsome moon half seen ;  
The cloud stooped low and the surf  
rose high ;  
And where there was a line of the sky,  
Wild wings loomed dark between.

And on a rock of the black beach-side,  
By the veiled moon dimly lit,  
There was something seemed to heave  
with life  
As the King drew nigh to it.

And was it only the tossing furze  
Or brake of the waste sea-wold ?  
Or was it an eagle bent to the blast ?  
When near we came, we knew it at last  
For a woman tattered and old.

But it seemed as though by a fire within  
Her writhen limbs were wrung ;  
And as soon as the King was close to her,  
She stood up gaunt and strong.

"T was then the moon sailed clear of the  
rack  
On high in her hollow dome ;  
And still as aloft with hoary crest  
Each clamorous wave rang home,  
Like fire in snow the moonlight blazed  
Amid the champing foam.

And the woman held his eyes with her  
eyes :—  
" O King, thou art come at last ;  
But thy wrath has haunted the Scottish  
Sea  
To my sight for four years past.

" Four years it is since first I met,  
Twixt the Duchray and the Dhu,  
A shape whose feet clung close in a  
shroud,  
And that shape for thine I knew.

" A year again, and on Inchkeith Isle  
I saw thee pass in the breeze,  
With the cerecloth risen above thy feet  
And wound about thy knees.

" And yet a year, in the Links of Forth,  
As a wanderer without rest,  
Thou cam'st with both thine arms i'  
the shroud  
That clung high up thy breast.

" And in this hour I find thee here,  
And well mine eyes may note  
That the winding-sheet hath passed thy  
breast  
And risen around thy throat.

" And when I meet thee again, O King,  
That of death hast such sore drouth,—  
Except thou turn again on this shore,—  
The winding-sheet shall have moved  
once more  
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

" O King, whom poor men bless for  
their King,  
Of thy fate be not so fain ;  
But these my words for God's message  
take,  
And turn thy steed, O King, for her sake  
Who rides beside thy rein !"

While the woman spoke, the King's  
horse reared  
As if it would breast the sea,  
And the Queen turned pale as she heard  
on the gale  
The voice die dolorously.

When the woman ceased, the steed was  
still,  
But the King gazed on her yet,  
And in silence save for the wail of the sea  
His eyes and her eyes met.

At last he said :—" God's ways are His  
own ;  
Man is but shadow and dust.  
Last night I prayed by His altar-stone ;  
To-night I wend to the feast of His Son ;  
And in Him I set my trust.

" I have held my people in sacred charge,  
And have not feared the sting

Of proud men's hate,—to His will resign'd  
Who has but one same death for a hind  
And one same death for a King.

" And if God in His wisdom have brought  
close  
The day when I must die,  
That day by water or fire or air  
My feet shall fall in the destined snare  
Wherever my road may lie.

" What man can say but the Fiend hath  
set  
Thy sorcery on my path,  
My heart with the fear of death to fill,  
And turn me against God's very will  
To sink in His burning wrath ?"

The woman stood as the train rode past,  
And moved nor limb nor eye ;  
And when we were shipped, we saw her  
there  
Still standing against the sky.

As the ship made way, the moon once  
more  
Sank slow in her rising pall ;  
And I thought of the shrouded wraith  
of the King,  
And I said, " The Heavens know all."

And now, ye lasses, must ye hear  
How my name is Kate Barlass :—  
But a little thing, when all the tale  
Is told of the weary mass  
Of crime and woe which in Scotland's  
realm  
God's will let come to pass.

'T was in the Charterhouse of Perth  
That the King and all his Court  
Were met, the Christmas Feast being  
done,  
For solace and disport.

'T was a wind-wild eve in February,  
And against the casement-pane  
The branches smote like summoning  
hands  
And muttered the driving rain.

And when the wind swooped over the  
lift  
And made the whole heaven frown,  
It seemed a grip was laid on the walls  
To tug the housetop down.

And the Queen was there, more stately  
fair  
Than a lily in garden set ;

And the king was loth to stir from her side;  
For as on the day when she was his bride,  
Even so he loved her yet.

And the Earl of Athole, the King's false friend,  
Sat with him at the board;  
And Robert Stuart the chamberlain  
Who had sold his sovereign Lord.

Yet the traitor Christopher Chaumber there  
Would fain have told him all,  
And vainly four times that night he strove  
To reach the King through the hall.

But the wine is bright at the goblet's brim  
Though the poison lurk beneath;  
And the apples still are red on the tree  
Within whose shade may the adder be  
That shall turn thy life to death.

There was a knight of the King's fast friends  
Whom he called the King of Love;  
And to such bright cheer and courtesy  
That name might best behave.

And the King and Queen both loved him well  
For his gentle knightliness;  
And with him the King, as that eve wore on,  
Was playing at the chess.

And the King said, (for he thought to jest  
And soothe the Queen thereby;—  
"In a book 't is writ that this same year  
A King shall in Scotland die.

"And I have pondered the matter o'er,  
And this have I found, Sir Hugh.—  
There are but two Kings on Scottish ground,  
And those Kings are I and you.

"And I have a wife and a newborn heir,  
And you are yourself alone;  
So stand you stark at my side with me  
To guard our double throne.

"For here sit I and my wife and child,  
As well your heart shall approve,  
In full surrender and soothfastness,  
Beneath your Kingdom of Love."

And the Knight laughed, and the Queen too smiled;

But I knew her heavy thought,  
And I strove to find in the good King's jest

What cheer might thence be wrought.

And I said, "My Liege, for the Queen's dear love

Now sing the song that of old  
You made, when a captive Prince you lay,  
And the nightingale sang sweet on the spray,  
In Windsor's castle-hold."

Then he smiled the smile I knew so well  
When he thought to please the Queen;  
The smile which under all bitter frowns  
Of hate that rose between,  
For ever dwelt at the poet's heart  
Like the bird of love unseen.

And he kissed her hand and took his harp,  
And the music sweetly rang;  
And when the song burst forth, it seemed  
"T was the nightingale that sang.

"*Worship, ye lovers, on this May:  
Of bliss your kalends are begun:  
Sing with us, Away, Winter, away!  
Come, Summer, the sweet season and sun!*

*Awake for shame,—your 'heaven is won,—*

*And amorously your heads lift all:  
Thank Love, that you to his grace doth call!"*

But when he bent to the Queen, and sang

The speech whose praise was hers,  
It seemed his voice was the voice of the Spring

And the voice of the bygone years.

"*The fairest and the freshest flower  
That ever I saw before that hour.  
The which o' the sudden made to start  
The blood of my body to my heart.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ah sweet, are ye a worldly creature  
Or heavenly thing in form of nature?"*

And the song was long, and richly stored  
With wonder and beauteous things:  
And the harp was tuned to every change



Of minstrel ministrings;  
But when he spoke of the Queen at the  
last,  
Its strings were his own heart-strings.

"Unworthy but only of her grace,  
Upon Love's rock that's easy and sure,  
In guerdon of all my love's space  
She took me her humble creature.  
Thus fell my blissful adventure  
In youth of love that from day to day  
Flowereth aye new, and further I say.

"To reckon all the circumstance  
As it happed when lessen gan my sore,  
Of my rancor and woful chance,  
It were too long,—I have done therefor.  
And of this flower I say no more  
But unto my help her heart hath tended  
And even from death her man defended."

"Aye, even from death," to myself I  
said;  
For I thought of the day when she  
Had borne him the news, at Roxbro'  
siege,  
Of the fell confederacy.

But Death even then took aim as he sang  
With an arrow deadly bright;  
And the grinning skull lurked grimly  
aloof,  
And the wings were spread far over the  
roof  
More dark than the winter night.

Yet truly along the amorous song  
Of Love's high pomp and state,  
There were words of Fortune's trackless  
doom  
And the dreadful face of Fate.

And oft have I heard again in dreams  
The voice of dire appeal  
In which the King then sang of the pit  
That is under Fortune's wheel.

"And under the wheel beheld I there  
An ugly Pit as deep as hell,  
That to behold I quaked for fear:  
And this I heard, that who therein fell  
Came no more up, tidings to tell:  
Whereat, astound of the fearful sight,  
I wist not what to do for fright."

And oft has my thought called up again  
These words of the changeeful song:—  
"Wist thou thy pain and thy travail  
To come, well might'st thou weep and  
wail!"

And our wail, O God! is long.

But the song's end was all of his love;  
And well his heart was grac'd  
With her smiling lips and her tear-bright  
eyes  
As his arm went round her waist.

And on the swell of her long fair throat  
Close clung the necklet-chain  
As he bent her pearl-tir'd head aside,  
And in the warmth of his love and pride  
He kissed her lips full fain.

And her true face was a rosy red,  
The very red of the rose  
That, couched on the happy garden-bed,  
In the summer sunlight glows.

And all the wondrous things of love  
That sang so sweet through the song  
Were in the look that met in their eyes,  
And the look was deep and long.

'T was then a knock came at the outer  
gate,  
And the usher sought the King.  
"The woman you met by the Scottish  
Sea,  
My Liege, would tell you a thing;  
And she says that her present need for  
speech  
Will bear no gainsaying."

And the King said:—"The hour is late;  
To-morrow will serve, I ween."  
Then he charged the usher strictly, and  
said:  
"No word of this to the Queen."

But the usher came again to the King,  
"Shall I call her back?" quoth he:  
"For as she went on her way, she cried,  
'Woe! Woe! then the thing must  
be!'"

And the King paused, but he did not  
speak.

Then he called for the Voidee-cup:  
And as we heard the twelfth hour strike,  
There by true lips and false lips alike  
Was the draught of trust drained up.

So with reverence meet to King and  
Queen,

To bed went all from the board;  
And the last to leave of the courtly train  
Was Robert Stuart the chamberlain  
Who had sold his sovereign lord.

And all the locks of the chamber-door  
Had the traitor riven and brast;

And that Fate might win sure way from  
afar,  
He had drawn out every bolt and bar  
That made the entrance fast.

And now at midnight he stole his way  
To the moat of the outer wall,  
And laid strong hurdles closely across  
Where the traitors' tread should fall.

But we that were the Queen's bower-  
maids  
Alone were left behind;  
And with heed we drew the curtains  
close  
Against the winter wind.

And now that all was still through the  
hall,  
More clearly we heard the rain  
That clamored ever against the glass  
And the boughs that beat on the pane.

But the fire was bright in the ingle-nook,  
And through empty space around  
The shadows cast on the arras'd wall  
'Mid the pictured kings stood sudden and  
tall  
Like spectres sprung from the ground.

And the bed was dight in a deep alcove;  
And as he stood by the fire  
The king was still in talk with the Queen  
While he doffed his goodly attire.

And the song had brought the image  
back  
Of many a bygone year;  
And many a loving word they said  
With hand in hand and head laid to  
head;  
And none of us went anear.

But Love was weeping outside the house,  
A child in the piteous rain;  
And as he watched the arrow of Death,  
He wailed for his own shafts close in the  
sheath  
That never should fly again.

And now beneath the window arose  
A wild voice suddenly:  
And the King reared straight, but the  
Queen fell back  
As for bitter dule to dree;  
And all of us knew the woman's voice  
Who spoke by the Scottish Sea.

"O King," she cried, "in an evil hour  
They drove me from thy gate;

And yet my voice must rise to thine  
ears;  
But alas! it comes too late!

"Last night at mid-watch, by Aberdour,  
When the moon was dead in the skies  
O King, in a death-light of thine own  
I saw thy shape arise.

"And in full season, as erst I said,  
The doom had gained its growth;  
And the shroud had risen above thy neck  
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"And no moon woke, but the pale dawn  
broke,  
And still thy soul stood there;  
And I thought its silence cried to my  
soul  
As the first rays crowned its hair.

"Since then have I journeyed fast and  
fain  
In very despite of Fate,  
Lest Hope might still be found in God's  
will:  
But they drove me from thy gate.

"For every man on God's ground, O  
King,  
His death grows up from his birth  
In a shadow-plant perpetually;  
And thine towers high, a black yew-  
tree,  
O'er the Charterhouse of Perth!"

That room was built far out from the  
house;  
And none but we in the room  
Might hear the voice that rose beneath,  
Nor the tread of the coming doom.

For now there came a torchlight-glare,  
And a clang of arms there came:  
And not a soul in that space but thought  
Of the foe Sir Robert Graeme.

Yea, from the country of the Wild Scots,  
O'er mountain, valley, and glen,  
He had brought with him in murderous  
league  
Three hundred armed men.

The King knew all in an instant's flash,  
And like a King did he stand;  
But there was no armor in all the room,  
Nor weapon lay to his hand.

And all we women flew to the door  
And thought to have made it fast:

But the bolts were gone and the bars  
were gone  
And the locks were riven and brast.

And he caught the pale queen in his  
arms  
As the iron footsteps fell,—  
Then loosed her, standing alone, and  
said,  
“Our bliss was our farewell!”

And 'twixt his lips he murmured a  
prayer,  
And he crossed his brow and breast;  
And proudly in royal hardihood  
Even so with folded arms he stood,—  
The prize of the bloody quest.

Then on me leaped the Queen like a  
deer:  
“Catherine, help!” she cried.  
And low at his feet we clasped his knees  
Together side by side.  
“Oh! even a King, for his people's  
sake,  
From treasonous death must hide!”

“For *her* sake most!” I cried, and I  
marked  
The pang that my words would wring.  
And the iron tongs from the chimney-  
nook  
I snatched and held to the King:—  
“Wrench up the plank! and the vault  
beneath  
Shall yield safe harboring.”

With brows low-bent, from my eager  
hand  
The heavy heft did he take;  
And the plank at his feet he wrenched  
and tore;  
And as he frowned through the open  
floor,  
Again I said, “For her sake!”

Then he cried to the Queen, “God's will  
be done!”  
For her hands were clasped in prayer.  
And down he sprang to the inner crypt;  
And straight we closed the plank he had  
ripp'd  
And toiled to smoothe it fair

(Alas! in that vault a gap once was  
Wherethro' the King might have fled;  
But three days since close-walled had it  
been [therein  
By his will; for the ball would roll  
When without at the palm he play'd.)

Then the Queen cried, “Catherine, keep  
the door,  
And I to this will suffice!”  
At her word I rose all dazed to my  
feet,  
And my heart was fire and ice.

And louder ever the voices grew,  
And the tramp of men in mail;  
Until to my brain it seemed to be  
As though I tossed on a ship at sea  
In the teeth of a crashing gale.

Then back I flew to the rest; and hard  
We strove with sinews knit  
To force the table against the door;  
But we might not compass it.

Then my wild gaze sped far down the  
hall  
To the place of the hearthstone-sill;  
And the Queen bent ever above the  
floor,  
For the plank was rising still.

And now the rush was heard on the  
stair,  
And “God, what help?” was our cry.  
And was I frenzied or was I bold?  
I looked at each empty stanchion-hold,  
And no bar but my arm had I!

Like iron felt my arm, as through  
The staple I made it pass:—  
Alack! it was flesh and bone—no more!  
‘T was Catherine Douglas sprang to the  
door,  
But I fell back Kate Barlass.

With that they all thronged into the  
hall,  
Half dim to my failing ken;  
And the space that was but a void before  
Was a crowd of wrathful men.  
Behind the door I had fall'n and lay,  
Yet my sense was wildly aware,  
And for all the pain of my shattered  
arm  
I never fainted there.

Even as I fell, my eyes were cast  
Where the King leaped down to the  
pit;  
And lo! the plank was smooth in its  
place.  
And the Queen stood far from it.

And under the litters and through the  
bed  
And within the presses all



The traitors sought for the King, and  
pierced  
The arras around the wall.

And through the chamber they ramped  
and stormed  
Like lions loose in the lair,  
And scarce could trust to their very  
eyes,—  
For behold! no King was there.

Than one of them seized the Queen, and  
cried,—  
“Now tell us, where is thy lord?”  
And he held the sharp point over her  
heart: [start,  
She drooped not her eyes nor did she  
But she answered never a word.

Then the sword half pierced the true  
true breast:  
But it was the Græme's own son  
Cried, “This is a woman,—we seek a  
man!”  
And away from her girdle-zone  
He struck the point of the murderous  
steel;  
And that foul deed was not done.

And forth flowed all the throng like a  
sea,  
And 't was empty space once more;  
And my eyes sought out the wounded  
Queen  
As I lay behind the door.

And I said: “Dear Lady, leave me here,  
For I cannot help you now;  
But fly while you may, and none shall  
reck  
Of my place here lying low.”

And she said, “My Catherine, God help  
thee!”  
Then she looked to the distant floor,  
And clasping her hands, “Oh God help  
him,”  
She sobbed, “for we can no more!”

But God He knows what help may mean,  
If it mean to live or to die;  
And what sore sorrow and mighty moan  
On earth it may cost ere yet a throne  
Be filled in His house on high.

And now the ladies fled with the Queen:  
And through the open door  
The night-wind wailed round the empty  
room  
And the rushes shook on the floor.

And the bed drooped low in the dark re-  
cess  
Whence the arras was rent away;  
And the firelight still shone over the  
space  
Where our hidden secret lay.

And the rain had ceased, and the moon-  
beams lit  
The window high in the wall,—  
Bright beams that on the plank that I  
knew  
Through the painted pane did fall  
And gleamed with the splendor of  
Scotland's crown  
And shield armorial.

But then a great wind swept up the skies,  
And the climbing moon fell back;  
And the royal blazon fled from the floor,  
And nought remained on its track;  
And high in the darkened window-pane  
The shield and the crown were black.

And what I say next I partly saw  
And partly I heard in sooth,  
And partly since from the murderers'  
lips  
The torture wrung the truth.

For now again came the armed tread  
And fast through the hall it fell;  
But the throng was less; and ere I saw,  
By the voice without I could tell  
That Robert Stuart had come with them  
Who knew that chamber well.

And over the space the Græme strode  
dark  
With his mantle round him flung;  
And in his eye was a flaming light  
But not a word on his tongue.

And Stuart held a torch to the floor,  
And he found the thing he sought;  
And they slashed the plank away with  
their swords;  
And O God! I fainted not!

And the traitor held his torch in the gap,  
All smoking and smouldering;  
And through the vapor and fire, beneath  
In the dark crypt's narrow ring,  
With a shout that pealed to the room's  
high roof  
They saw their naked King.

Half naked he stood, but stood as one  
Who yet could do and dare:

With the crown, the King was stript  
away,—  
The Knight was reft of his battle-  
array.—  
But still the Man was there.

From the rout then stepped a villain  
forth,—

Sir John Hall was his name ;  
And mightily by the shoulder-blades  
the vault

Beneath the torchlight-flame.

Of his person and stature was the King  
A man right manly strong,  
And mightily by the shoulder-blades  
His foe to his feet he flung.

Then the traitor's brother, Sir Thomas  
Hall,

Sprang down to work his worst ;  
And the King caught the second man  
by the neck

And flung him above the first.

And he smote and trampled them  
under him ;

And a long month thence they bare  
All black their throats with the grip of  
his hands

When the hangman's hand came there.

And sore he strove to have had their  
knives,

But the sharp blades gashed his hands.  
Oh James ! so armed, thou hadst battled  
there

Till help had come of thy bands ;  
And oh ! once more thou hadst held our  
throne

And ruled thy Scottish lands !

But while the King o'er his foes still  
raged

With a heart that nought could tame.  
Another man sprang down to the crypt ;  
And with his sword in his hand hard-  
gripp'd

There stood Sir Robert Græme.

(Now shame on the recreant traitor's  
heart

Who durst not face his King  
Till the body unarmed was wearied out  
With two-fold combating !

Ah ! well might the people sing and say.  
As oft ye have heard aright :—

" O Robert Græme, O Robert Græme,

*Who slew our King, God give thee  
shame !"*

For he slew him not as a knight.)

And the naked King turned round at bay,  
But his strength had passed the goal,  
And he could but gasp :—" Mine hour is  
come ;

But oh ! to succor thine own soul's  
doom,

Let a priest now shrive my soul !"

And the traitor looked on the King's  
spent strength,

And said :—" Have I kept my word ?—  
Yea, King, the mortal pledge that I  
gave ?

No black friar's shrift thy soul shall save,  
But the shrift of this red sword !"

With that he smote his King through  
the breast ;

And all they three in that pen  
Fell on him and stabbed and stabbed him  
there

Like merciless murderous men.

Yet seemed it now that Sir Robert  
Græme,

Ere the King's last breath was o'er,  
Turned sick at heart with the deadly  
sight

And would have done no more.

But a cry came from the troop above :

" If him thou do not slay,  
The price of his life that thou dost spare  
Thy forfeit life shall pay !"

O God ! what more did I hear or see,  
Or how should I tell the rest ?

But there at length our King lay slain  
With sixteen wounds in his breast.

O God ! and now did a bell boom forth,  
And the murderers turned and fled ;—  
Too late, too late, O God, did it sound !—  
And I heard the true man muttering  
round,

And the cries and the coming tread.

But ere they came to the black death-  
gap

Somewise did I creep and steal ;

And lo ! or ever I swooned away,  
Through the dusk I saw where the white  
face lay

In the Pit of Fortune's Wheel.

And now, ye Scottish maids who have heard

Dread things of the days grown old,—  
Even at the last, of true Queen Jane  
May somewhat yet be told,  
And how she dealt for her dear lord's sake  
Dire vengeance manifold.

'T was in the Charterhouse of Perth,  
In the fair-lit Death-chapelle,  
That the slain King's corpse on bier was lain  
With chant and requiem-knell.

And all with royal wealth of balm  
Was the body purified;  
And none could trace on the brow and lips  
The death that he had died.

In his robes of state he lay asleep  
With orb and sceptre in hand;  
And by the crown he wore on his throne  
Was his kingly forehead spann'd.

And, girls, 't was a sweet sad thing to see  
How the curling golden hair,  
As in the day of the poet's youth,  
From the King's crown clustered there.

And if all had come to pass in the brain  
That throbbed beneath those curls,  
Then Scots had said in the days to come  
That this their soil was a different home  
And a different Scotland, girls!

And the Queen sat by him night and day,  
And oft she knelt in prayer,  
All wan and pale in the widow's veil  
That shrouded her shining hair.

And I had got good help of my hurt:  
And only to me some sign  
She made; and save the priests that  
were there  
No face would she see but mine.

And the month of March wore on apace;  
And now fresh couriers fared  
Still from the country of the Wild Scots  
With news of the traitors snared.

And still as I told her day by day,  
Her pallor changed to sight,

And the frost grew to a furnace-flame  
That burnt her visage white.

And evermore as I brought her word,  
She bent to her dead King James,  
And in the cold ear with fire-drawn  
breath  
She spoke the traitors' names.

But when the name of Sir Robert Græme  
Was the one she had to give,  
I ran to hold her up from the floor;  
For the froth was on her lips, and sore  
I feared that she could not live.

And the month of March wore nigh to  
its end,  
And still was the death-pall spread;  
For she would not bury her slaughtered  
lord  
Till his slayers all were dead.

And now of their dooms dread tidings  
came,  
And of torments fierce and dire:  
And nought she spake,—she had ceased  
to speak,—  
But her eyes were a soul on fire.

But when I told her the bitter end  
Of the stern and just award,  
She leaned o'er the bier, and thrice  
three times  
She kissed the lips of her lord.

And then she said,—“My King, they are  
dead!”  
And she knelt on the chapel-floor,  
And whispered low with a strange proud  
smile,—  
“James, James, they suffered more!”

Last she stood up to her queenly height,  
But she shook like an autumn leaf,  
As though the fire wherein she burned  
Then left her body, and all were turned  
To winter of life-long grief.

And “O James!” she said,—“My  
James!” she said,—  
“Alas for the woful thing,  
That a poet true and a friend of man,  
In desperate days of bale and ban,  
Should needs be born a King!” 1881.

# MORRIS

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## MORRIS

## WINTER WEATHER

WE rode together  
 In the winter weather  
     To the broad mead under the hill;  
 Though the skies did shiver  
 With the cold, the river  
     Ran, and was never still.  
  
 No cloud did darken  
 The night; we did harken  
     The hound's bark far away.  
 It was solemn midnight  
 In that dread, dread night,  
     In the years that have pass'd for aye.  
  
 Two rode beside me,  
 My banner did hide me,  
     As it drooped adown from my lance;  
 With its deep blue trapping,  
 The mail over-lapping,  
     My gallant horse did prance.

So ever together  
 In the sparkling weather  
     Moved my banner and lance;  
 And its laurel trapping,  
 The steel over-lapping,  
     The stars saw quiver and dance.

We met together  
 In the winter weather  
     By the town-walls under the hill;  
 His mail rings came clinking,  
 They broke on my thinking,  
     For the night was hush'd and still.

Two rode beside him,  
 His banner did hide him,  
     As it drooped down straight from his  
     lance;  
 With its blood-red trapping,  
 The mail over-lapping,  
     His mighty horse did prance.

And ever together  
In the solemn weather  
    Moved his banner and lance;  
And the holly trapping,  
The steel over-lapping,  
    Did shimmer and shiver, and dance.

Back reined the squires  
Till they saw the spires  
    Over the city wall;  
Ten fathoms between us,  
No dames could have seen us  
    Tilt from the city wall.

There we sat upright  
Till the full midnight  
    Should be told from the city's chimes;  
Sharp from the towers  
Leaped forth the showers  
    Of the many clanging rhymes.

'Twas the midnight hour,  
Deep from the tower  
    Boom'd the following bell;  
Down go our lances,  
Shout for the lances!  
    The last toll was his knell.

There he lay, dying;  
He had, for his lying,  
    A spear in his traitorous mouth;  
A false tale made he  
Of my true, true lady;  
    But the spear went through his mouth.

In the winter weather  
We rode back together  
    From the broad mead under the hill;  
And the cock sung his warning  
As it grew toward morning,  
    But the far-off hound was still.

Black grew his tower  
As we rode down lower,  
    Black from the barren hill;  
And our horses strode  
Up the winding road  
    To the gateway dim and still.

At the gate of his tower,  
In the quiet hour,  
    We laid his body there;  
But his helmet broken,  
We took as a token;  
    Shout for my lady fair!

We rode back together  
In the wintry weather  
    From the broad mead under the hill;

No cloud did darken  
The night; we did harken  
    How the hound bay'd from the hill.  
January, 1856.<sup>1</sup>

## RIDING TOGETHER

FOR many, many days together  
The wind blew steady from the East;  
For many days hot grew the weather,  
About the time of our Lady's Feast.

For many days we rode together,  
Yet met we neither friend nor foe;  
Hotter and clearer grew the weather,  
Steadily did the East wind blow.

We saw the trees in the hot, bright  
weather,  
Clear-cut, with shadows very black,  
As freely we rode on together  
With helms unlaced and bridles slack.

And often as we rode together,  
We, looking down the green-bank'd  
stream,  
Saw flowers in the sunny weather,  
And saw the bubble-making bream.

And in the night lay down together,  
And hung above our heads the rood,  
Or watch'd night-long in the dewy  
weather,  
The while the moon did watch the  
wood.

Our spears stood bright and thick to-  
gether,  
Straight out the banners stream'd  
behind,  
As we gallop'd on in the sunny weather,  
With faces turn'd towards the wind.

Down sank our threescore spears to-  
gether,  
As thick we saw the pagans ride;  
His eager face in the clear fresh weather,  
Shone out that last time by my side.

Up the sweep of the bridge we dash'd  
together,  
It rock'd to the crash of the meeting  
spears,

<sup>1</sup>The dates for Morris's poems have been compiled with the help of Mr. Temple Scott's excellent Bibliography of the Works of William Morris, and Mr. Forman's The Books of William Morris.



Down rain'd the buds of the dear spring  
weather,  
The elm-tree flowers fell like tears.

There, as we roll'd and writhed together,  
I threw my arms above my head,  
For close by my side, in the lovely  
weather,  
I saw him reel and fall back dead.

I and the slayer met together,  
He waited the death-stroke there in  
his place,  
With thoughts of death, in the lovely  
weather,  
Gapingly mazed at my madden'd face.

Madly I fought as we fought together ;  
In vain : the little Christian band  
The pagans drown'd, as in stormy  
weather,  
The river drowns low-lying land.

They bound my blood-stain'd hands to-  
gether,  
They bound his corpse to nod by my  
side :  
Then on we rode, in the bright March  
weather,  
With clash of cymbals did we ride.

We ride no more, no more together ;  
My prison-bars are thick and strong,  
I take no heed of any weather,  
The sweet Saints grant I live not long.  
May, 1856.

#### THE CHAPEL IN LYONNESS

SIR OZANA LE CURE HARDY. SIR  
GALAHAD. SIR BORS DE GANYNS.

*Sir Ozana.* All day long and every day,  
From Christmas-Eve to Whit-Sunday,  
Within that Chapel-aisle I lay,  
And no man came a-near.

Naked to the waist was I,  
And deep within my breast did lie,  
Though no man any blood could spy,  
The truncheon of a spear.

No meat did ever pass my lips  
Those days. Alas ! the sunlight slips  
From off the gilded parclose, dips,  
And night comes on apace.

My arms lay back behind my head ;  
Over my raised-up knees was spread  
A samite cloth of white and red ;  
A rose lay on my face.

Many a time I tried to shout ;  
But as in dream of battle-rout,  
My frozen speech would not well out ;  
I could not even weep.

With inward sigh I see the sun  
Fade off the pillars one by one,  
My heart faints when the day is done,  
Because I cannot sleep.

Sometimes strange thoughts pass  
through my head ;  
Not like a tomb is this my bed,  
Yet oft I think that I am dead ;  
That round my tomb is writ,

" Ozana of the hardy heart,  
Knight of the Table Round,  
Pray for his soul, lords, of your part ;  
A true knight he was found."

Ah ! me, I cannot fathom it. [*He sleeps.*  
*Sir Galahad.* All day long and every day,  
Till his madness pass'd away,  
I watch'd Ozana as he lay  
Within the gilded screen.

All my singing moved him not ;  
As I sung my heart grew hot,  
With the thought of Launcelot  
Far away, I ween.

So I went a little space  
From out the chapel, bathed my face  
In the stream that runs apace  
By the churchyard wall.

There I pluck'd a faint wild rose,  
Hard by where the linden grows,  
Sighing over silver rows  
Of the lilies tall.

I laid the flower across his mouth ;  
The sparkling drops seem'd good for  
drouth ;  
He smiled, turn'd round towards the  
south,  
Held up a golden tress.

The light smote on it from the west ;  
He drew the covering from his breast.  
Against his heart that hair he pressed ;  
Death him soon will bless.

*Sir Bors.* I enter'd by the western door ;  
I saw a knight's helm lying there ;  
I raised my eyes from off the floor,  
And caught the gleaming of his hair.

I stept full softly up to him ;  
I laid my chin upon his head ;  
I felt him smile ; my eyes did swim,  
I was so glad he was not dead.

I heard Ozana murmur low.  
"There comes no sleep nor any love."  
But Galahad stoop'd and kiss'd his brow :  
He shiver'd ; I saw his pale lips move.

*Sir Ozana.* There comes no sleep nor  
any love ;  
Ah me ! I shiver with delight.  
I am so weak I cannot move ;  
God move me to thee, dear, to-night !  
Christ help ! I have but little wit :  
My life went wrong ; I see it writ,

"Ozana of the hardy heart,  
Knight of the Table Round,  
Pray for his soul, lords, on your part ;  
A good knight he was found."

Now I begin to fathom it. [*He dies.*]

*Sir Bors.* Galahad sits dreamily :  
What strange things may his eyes see,  
Great blue eyes fix'd full on me ?  
On his soul, Lord, have mercy.

*Sir Galahad.* Ozana, shall I pray for  
thee ?  
Her cheek is laid to thine ;  
No long time hence, also I see  
Thy wasted fingers twine

Within the tresses of her hair  
That shineth gloriously,  
Thinly outspread in the clear air  
Against the jasper sea.

September, 1856.

#### SUMMER DAWN

**PRAY** but one prayer for me 'twixt thy  
closed lips ;  
Think but one thought of me up in the  
stars.  
The summer night waneth, the morning  
light slips,  
Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the  
aspen, betwixt the cloud-bars,  
That are patiently waiting there for the  
dawn :  
Patient and colorless, though Heaven's  
gold  
Waits to float through them along with  
the sun.  
Far out in the meadows, above the young  
corn,

The heavy elms wait, and restless and  
cold  
The uneasy wind rises ; the roses are  
dun ;  
They pray the long gloom through for  
daylight new born,  
Round the lone house in the midst of  
the corn.  
Speak but one word to me over the  
corn,  
Over the tender, bow'd locks of the  
corn.  
October, 1856.

#### HANDS

'**TWIXT** the sunlight and the shade  
Float up memories of my maid :  
God, remember Guendolen !

Gold or gems she did not wear,  
But her yellow rippled hair,  
Like a veil, hid Guendolen !

'**Twixt** the sunlight and the shade,  
My rough hands so strangely made,  
Folded Golden Guendolen.

Hands used to grip the sword-hilt hard,  
Framed her face, while on the sward  
Tears fell down from Guendolen.

Guendolen now speaks no word,  
Hands fold round about the sword :  
Now no more of Guendolen.

Only 'twixt the light and shade  
Floating memories of my maid  
Make me pray for Guendolen.  
1856.

#### GOLD HAIR

Is it not true that every day  
She climbeth up the same strange way,  
Her scarlet cloak spread broad and gay,  
Over my golden hair ?

When I undo the knotted mass,  
Fathoms below the shadows pass  
Over my hair along the grass.  
O my golden hair !

See on the marble parapet,  
I lean my brow, strive to forget  
That fathoms below my hair grows wet  
With the dew, my golden hair.

See on the marble parapet,  
The faint red stains with tears are wet ;  
The long years pass, no help comes yet  
To free my golden hair.



And yet : but I am growing old,  
For want of love my heart is cold :  
Years pass, the while I loose and fold  
The fathoms of my hair.

1858.<sup>1</sup>

## THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

But, knowing now that they would have  
her speak,  
She threw her wet hair backward from  
her brow,  
Her hand close to her mouth touching  
her cheek,

As though she had had there a shameful  
blow,  
And feeling it shameful to feel aught  
but shame  
All through her heart, yet felt her cheek  
burned so,

She must a little touch it : like one lame  
She walked away from Gauwaine, with  
her head  
Still lifted up ; and on her cheek of  
flame

The tears dried quick ; she stopped at  
last and said :  
" O knights and lords, it seems but little  
skill  
To talk of well-known things past now  
and dead.

" God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,  
And pray you all forgiveness heartily !  
Because you must be right, such great  
lords ; still

" Listen, suppose your time were come  
to die,  
And you were quite alone and very  
weak ;  
Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

" The wind was ruffling up the narrow  
streak  
Of river through your broad lands run-  
ning well :  
Suppose a hush should come, then some  
one speak :

" One of these cloths is heaven, and one  
is hell,

<sup>1</sup> The preceding poem, *Hands*, published under that title in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, 1856, and the lyric stanzas to which I have here given the title *Gold Hair*, both form part of *Rapunzel* in the *Guenevere* volume, 1858.

Now choose one cloth for ever ; which  
they be,  
I will not tell you, you must somehow  
tell

" Of your own strength and mightiness ;  
here, see !'  
Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your  
eyes,  
At foot of your familiar bed to see

" A great God's angel standing, with  
such dyes,  
Not known on earth, on his great wings,  
and hands,  
Held out two ways, light from the inner  
skies

" Showing him well, and making his  
commands  
Seem to be God's commands, moreover,  
too,  
Holding within his hands the cloths on  
wands ;

" And one of these strange choosing  
cloths was blue,  
Wavy and long, and one cut short and  
red ;  
No man could tell the better of the two.

" After a shivering half-hour you said :  
' God help ! heaven's color, the blue ;'  
and he said, ' hell.'  
Perhaps you would then roll upon your  
bed,

" And cry to all good men that loved  
you well,  
' Ah Christ ! if only I had known,  
known, known ;'  
Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

" Like wisest man how all things would  
be, moan,  
And roll and hurt myself, and long to die,  
And yet fear much to die for what was  
sown.

" Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever may have happened through  
these years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that  
you lie."

Her voice was low at first, being full of  
tears,  
But as it cleared, it grew full loud and  
shrill,  
Growing a windy shriek in all men's  
ears,

A ringing in their startled brains, until  
 She said that Gauwaine lied, then her  
 voice sunk,  
 And her great eyes began again to fill,  
 Though still she stood right up, and  
 never shrunk,  
 But spoke on bravely, glorious lady fair!  
 Whatever tears her full lips may have  
 drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and  
 wrung her hair,  
 Spoke out at last with no more trace of  
 shame,  
 With passionate twisting of her body  
 there:

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot  
 came  
 To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christ-  
 mastime  
 This happened; when the heralds sung  
 his name,

"Son of King Ban of Benwick, seemed  
 to chime  
 Along with all the bells that rang that  
 day,  
 O'er the white roofs, with little change  
 of rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed  
 away,  
 And over me the April sunshine came,  
 Made very awful with black hail-clouds,  
 yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with  
 flame,  
 And bowed my head down: Autumn,  
 and the sick  
 Sure knowledge things would never be  
 the same,

"However often Spring might be most  
 thick  
 Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and  
 I grew  
 Careless of most things, let the clock  
 tick, tick,

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right  
 through  
 My eager body; while I laughed out loud,  
 And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any  
 cloud.

Behold, my judges, then the cloths were  
 brought;  
 While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts  
 would crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought  
 By Arthur's great name and his little  
 love:

Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever  
 round me move  
 Glorifying all things; for a little word,  
 Scarce ever meant at all, must I now  
 prove

"Stone-cold for ever? Pray you, does  
 the Lord  
 Will that all folks should be quite happy  
 and good?  
 I love God now a little, if this cord

"Were broken, once for all what striving  
 could  
 Make me love anything in earth or  
 heaven?  
 So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn  
 smooth and even,  
 Down to a cool sea on a summer day;  
 Yet still in slipping there was some  
 small leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small  
 stones by the way,  
 Until one surely reached the sea at last,  
 And felt strange new joy as the worn  
 head lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed;  
 yea all past  
 Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,  
 Washed utterly out by the dear waves  
 o'ercast,

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships!  
 Do I not know now of a day in Spring?  
 No minute of that wild day ever slips

"From out my memory; I hear thrushes  
 sing,  
 And wheresoever I may be, straightway  
 Thoughts of it all come up with most  
 fresh sting:

"I was half mad with beauty on that  
 day,  
 And went without my ladies all alone.  
 In a quiet garden walled round every  
 way;

" I was right joyful of that wall of stone,  
That shut the flowers and trees up with  
the sky,  
And trebled all the beauty : to the bone,

" Yea right through to my heart, grown  
very shy  
With wary thoughts, it pierced, and  
made me glad ;  
Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

" A little thing just then had made me  
mad ;  
I dared not think, as I was wont to do,  
Sometimes, upon my beauty ; if I had

" Held out my long hand up against the  
blue,  
And, looking on the tenderly darken'd  
fingers,  
Thought that by rights one ought to see  
quite through,

" There, see you, where the soft still  
light yet lingers,  
Round by the edges ; what should I have  
done,  
If this had joined with yellow spotted  
singers,

" And startling green drawn upward by  
the sun ?  
But shouting, loosed out, see now ! all  
my hair,  
And trancedly stood watching the west  
wind run

" With faintest half-heard breathing  
sound : why there  
I lose my head e'en now in doing this ;  
But shortly listen : in that garden fair

" Came Launcelot walking ; this is true,  
the kiss  
Wherewith we kissed in meeting that  
spring day ;  
I scarce dare talk of the remember'd bliss,

" When both our mouths went wander-  
ing in one way,  
And aching sorely, met among the  
leaves ;  
Our hands being left behind strained  
far away.

" Never within a yard of my bright  
sleeves  
Had Launcelot come before : and now  
so nigh !  
After that day why is it Guenevere  
grieves ?

" Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever happened on through all  
those years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that  
you lie.

" Being such a lady could I weep these  
tears  
If this were true ? A great queen such as I  
Having sinn'd this way, straight her  
conscience sears ;

" And afterwards she liveth hatefully,  
Slaying and poisoning, certes never  
weeps :  
Gauwaine be friends now, speak me  
lovingly.

" Do I not see how God's dear pity creeps  
All through your frame, and trembles in  
your mouth ?  
Remember in what grave your mother  
sleeps,

" Buried in some place far down in the  
south  
Men are forgetting as I speak to you ;  
By her head sever'd in that awful drouth

" Of pity that drew Agravaine's fell blow,  
I pray your pity ! let me not scream out  
For ever after, when the shrill winds blow

" Through half your castle-locks ! let  
me not shout  
For ever after in the winter night  
When you ride out alone ! in battle-rout

" Let not my rusting tears make your  
sword light !  
Ah ! God of mercy, how he turns away !  
So, ever must I dress me to the fight,

" So : let God's justice work ! Gauwaine,  
I say,  
See me hew down your proofs : yea all  
men know  
Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one  
day,

" One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*, for so  
All good knights held it after, saw :  
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknighly outrage ;  
though

" You, Gauwaine, held his word without  
a flaw.

Not so, fair lords, even if the world  
should end

" This very day, and you were judges  
here  
Instead of God. Did you see Melly-  
graunce  
When Launcelot stood by him? what  
white fear

" Curdled his blood, and how his teeth  
did dance,  
His side sink in? as my knight cried and  
said:

" Slayer of unarm'd men, here is a chance!

" 'Setter of traps, I pray you guard your  
head,  
By God I am so glad to fight with you,  
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels lead

" 'For driving weight; hurrah now!  
draw and do,  
For all my wounds are moving in my  
breast,  
And I am getting mad with waiting so,'

" He struck his hands together o'er the  
beast,  
Who fell down flat, and grovell'd at his  
feet,  
And groan'd at being slain so young:  
'At least,'

" My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are  
so fleet  
At catching ladies, half-arm'd will I  
fight,  
My left side all uncovered!' then I weet,

" Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with  
great delight  
Upon his knave's face; not until just  
then  
Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

" Along the lists look to my stake and  
pen  
With such a joyous smile, it made me  
sigh  
From agony beneath my waist-chain,  
when

" The fight began, and to me they drew  
nigh;  
Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,  
And traversed warily, and ever high

" And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my  
knight  
Sudden threw up his sword to his left  
hand,  
Caught it and swung it; that was all the  
fight;

" Except a spout of blood on the hot land;  
For it was hottest summer; and I know  
I wonder'd how the fire, while I should  
stand,

" And burn, against the heat, would  
quiver so,  
Yards above my head; thus these mat-  
ters went;  
Which things were only warnings of  
the woe

" That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce  
was shent,  
For Mellyagraunce had fought against  
the Lord;  
Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you  
be blent

" With all his wickedness; say no rash  
word  
Against me, being so beautiful; my eyes  
Wept all away to gray, may bring some  
sword

" To drown you in your blood; see my  
breast rise,  
Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand;  
And how my arms are moved in won-  
derful wise,

" Yea also at my full heart's strong com-  
mand,  
See through my long throat how the  
words go up  
In ripples to my mouth; how in my hand

" The shadow lies like wine within a cup  
Of marvellously color'd gold; yea now  
This little wind is rising, look you up,

" And wonder how the light is falling so  
Within my moving tresses: will you dare  
When you have looked a little on my  
brow,

" To say this thing is vile? or will you  
care  
For any plausible lies of cunning woof,  
When you can see my face with no lie  
there

" For ever? am I not a gracious proof?—  
'But in your chamber Launcelot was  
found'—  
Is there a good knight then would stand  
aloof,

" When a queen says with gentle  
queenly sound:

'O true as steel, come now and talk with  
me,

I love to see your step upon the ground

"Unwavering, also well I love to see  
That gracious smile light up your face,  
and hear

Your wonderful words, that all mean  
verily

"The thing they seem to mean : good  
friend, so dear  
To me in everything, come here to-night,  
Or else the hours will pass most dull and  
drear ;

"If you come not, I fear this time I  
might  
Get thinking over much of times gone  
by,

When I was young, and green hope was  
in sight :

"For no man cares now to know why I  
sigh ;  
And no man comes to sing me pleasant  
songs,  
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers  
that lie

"So thick in the gardens ; therefore  
one so long  
To see you, Launcelot ; that we may be  
Like children once again, free from all  
wrongs

"Just for one night.' Did he not come  
to me ?  
What thing could keep true Launcelot  
away  
If I said, 'Come?' there was one less  
than three

"In my quiet room that night, and we  
were gay ;  
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and  
sick.  
Because a bawling broke our dream up,  
yea

"I looked at Launcelot's face and could  
not speak,  
For he looked helpless too, for a little  
while ;

Then I remember how I tried to shriek,

"And could not, but fell down ; from  
tile to tile

The stones they threw up rattled o'er  
my head [while  
And made me dizzier ; till within a

"My maids were all about me, and my  
head

On Launcelot's breast was being soothed  
away  
From its white chattering, until Launcelot  
said : . . .

"By God ! I will not tell you more to-  
day,  
Judge any way you will : what matter  
it ?  
You know quite well the story of that  
fray,

"How Launcelot still'd their bawling,  
the mad fit  
That caught up Gauwaine, all, all,  
verily,  
But just that which would save me ;  
these things flit.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever may have happen'd these long  
years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that  
you lie !

"All I have said is truth, by Christ's  
dear tears."  
She would not speak another word, but  
stood  
Turn'd sideways ; listening, like a man  
who hears

His brother's trumpet sounding through  
the wood  
Of his foes' lances. She leaned eagerly.  
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as  
she could

At last hear something really ; joyfully  
Her cheek grew crimson, as the head-  
long speed  
Of the roan charger drew all men to see.  
The knight who came was Launcelot at  
good need. 1838.

#### THE GILLIFLOWER OF GOLD

A golden gilliflower to-day  
I wore upon my helm alway,  
And won the prize of this tourney.  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

However well Sir Giles might sit,  
His sun was weak to wither it,  
Lord Miles's blood was dew on it :  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Although my spear in splinters flew,  
From John's steel-coat, my eye was  
true ;

I wheel'd about, and cried for you.  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Yea, do not doubt my heart was good,  
Though my sword flew like rotten wood,  
To shout, although I scarcely stood,  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

My hand was steady too, to take  
My axe from round my neck, and break  
John's steel-coat up for my love's sake.  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

When I stood in my tent again,  
Arming afresh, I felt a pain  
Take hold of me, I was so fain—  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée—*

To hear : *Honneur aux fils des preux !*  
Right in my ears again, and shew  
The gilliflower blossom'd new.  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

The Sieur Guillaume against me came,  
His tabard bore three points of flame  
From a red heart ; with little blame,—  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée,—*

Our tough spears crackled up like straw ;  
He was the first to turn and draw  
His sword, that had nor speck nor flaw ;  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

But I felt weaker than a maid,  
And my brain, dizzied and afraid,  
Within my helm a fierce tune play'd,  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée,*

Until I thought of your dear head,  
Bow'd to the gilliflower bed,  
The yellow flowers stain'd with red ;  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Crash ! how the swords met : *giroflée !*  
The fierce tune in my helm would play,  
*La belle ! la belle ! jaune giroflée !*  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Once more the great swords met again :  
“ *La belle ! la belle !* ” but who fell then ?  
Le Sieur Guillaume, who struck down  
ten ;  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*

And as with mazed and unarm'd face,  
Toward my own crown and the Queen's  
place,

They led me at a gentle pace.—  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée,—*

I almost saw your quiet head  
Bow'd o'er the gilliflower bed,  
The yellow flowers stain'd with red.  
*Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.*  
1858.

### SHAMEFUL DEATH

THERE were four of us about that bed ;  
The mass-priest knelt at the side,  
I and his mother stood at the head,  
Over his feet lay the bride ;  
We were quite sure that he was dead,  
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,  
He did not die in the day,  
But in the morning twilight  
His spirit pass'd away,  
When neither sun nor moon was bright,  
And the trees were merely gray.

He was not slain with the sword,  
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,  
Yet spoke he never a word  
After he came in here ;  
I cut away the cord  
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,  
For the recreants came behind,  
In a place where the hornbeams grow,  
A path right hard to find,  
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,  
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,  
When his arms were pinion'd fast,  
Sir John the knight of the Fen,  
Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,  
With knights threescore and ten,  
Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,  
And my hair is all turn'd gray,  
But I met Sir John of the Fen  
Long ago on a summer day,  
And am glad to think of the moment  
when  
I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,  
And my strength is mostly pass'd,  
But long ago I and my men,  
When the sky was overcast,  
And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of  
the fen,  
Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.



And now, knights all of you,  
I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,  
A good knight and a true,  
And for Alice, his wife, pray too.  
1858.

## THE EVE OF CRECY

GOLD on her head, and gold on her feet,  
And gold where the hems of her kirtle  
meet,  
And a golden girdle round my sweet;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Margaret's maids are fair to see,  
Freshly dress'd and pleasantly;  
Margaret's hair falls down to her knee;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

If I were rich I would kiss her feet;  
I would kiss the place where the gold  
hems meet,  
And the golden kirtle round my sweet;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Ah me! I have never touch'd her hand;  
When the arriere-ban goes through the  
land,  
Six basnets under my pennon stand;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And many an one grins under his hood:  
Sir Lambert du Bois, with all his men  
good,  
Has neither food nor firewood;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,  
And the golden girdle of my sweet,  
And thereabouts where the gold hems  
meet;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Yet even now it is good to think,  
While my poor varlets grumble and  
drink  
In my desolate hall, where the fires  
sink,—  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.—*

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,  
In glory of gold and glory of hair,  
And glory of glorious face most fair;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,  
Because this battle draweth near;  
For what have I to lose or fear?  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

For, look you, my horse is good to prance  
A right fair measure in this war-dance  
Before the eyes of Philip of France;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite*

And sometime it may hap, perdie,  
While my new towers stand up three  
and three,  
And my hall gets painted fair to see—  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite—*

That folks may say: Times change, by  
the rood,  
For Lambert, banneret of the wood,  
Has heaps of food and firewood;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood  
Of a damsel of right noble blood,  
St. Ives, for Lambert of the Wood!  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*  
1858.

## THE SAILING OF THE SWORD

ACROSS the empty garden-beds,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
I scarcely saw my sisters' heads  
Bowed each beside a tree.  
I could not see the castle leads,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

Alicia wore a scarlet gown,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
But Ursula's was russet brown:  
For the mist we could not see  
The scarlet roofs of the good town,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

Green holly in Alicia's hand,  
*When the Sword went out to sea;*  
With sere oak-leaves did Ursula stand;  
Oh! yet alas for me!  
I did but bear a peel'd white wand,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

O, russet brown and scarlet bright,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
My sisters wore; I wore but white:  
Red, brown, and white, are three;  
Three damozels; each had a knight,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

Sir Robert shouted loud, and said;  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
'Alicia, while I see thy head,  
What shall I bring for thee?'  
"O, my sweet Lord, a ruby red:"  
*The Sword went out to sea.*

Sir Miles said, while the sails hung down,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 "O, Ursula! while I see the town,  
 What shall I bring for thee?"  
 "Dear knight, bring back a falcon  
 brown:"  
*The Sword went out to Sea.*

But my Roland, no word he said  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 But only turn'd away his head;  
 A quick shriek came from me:  
 "Come back, dear lord, to your white  
 maid!"  
*The Sword went out to sea.*

The hot sun bit the garden-beds  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 Beneath an apple-tree our heads  
 Stretched out toward the sea;  
 Gray gleamed the thirsty castle-leads,  
*When the Sword came back from sea.*

Lord Robert brought a ruby red,  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 He kissed Alicia on the head:  
 "I am come back to thee;  
 'T is time, sweet love, that we were  
 wed,  
*Now the Sword is back from sea!"*

Sir Miles he bore a falcon brown,  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 His arms went round tall Ursula's gown:  
 "What joy, O love, but thee?  
 Let us be wed in the good town,  
*Now the Sword is back from sea!"*

My heart grew sick, no more afraid,  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 Upon the deck a tall white maid  
 Sat on Lord Roland's knee;  
 His chin was press'd upon her head,  
*When the Sword came back from sea!*  
 1858.

## THE BLUE CLOSET

### THE DAMOZELS

LADY ALICE, lady Louise,  
 Between the wash of the tumbling seas  
 We are ready to sing, if so ye please:  
 So lay your long hands on the keys;  
 "Sing, *Laudate pueri.*"

*And ever the great bell overhead  
 Boom'd in the wind a knell for the dead.  
 Though no one toll'd it, a knell for the  
 dead.*

### LADY LOUISE

Sister, let the measure swell  
 Not too loud; for you sing not well  
 If you drown the faint boom of the bell;  
 He is weary, so am I.

*And ever the chevron overhead  
 Flapp'd on the banner of the dead;  
 (Was he asleep, or was he dead?)*

### LADY ALICE

Alice the Queen, and Louise the Queen,  
 Two damzels wearing purple and green,  
 Four lone ladies dwelling here  
 From day to day and year to year;  
 And there is none to let us go;  
 To break the locks of the doors below,  
 Or shovel away the heaped-up snow;  
 And when we die no man will know  
 That we are dead; but they give us  
 leave,

Once every year on Christmas-eve,  
 To sing in the Closet Blue one song;  
 And we should be so long, so long,  
 If we dared, in singing; for dream on  
 dream,

They float on in a happy stream;  
 Float from the gold strings, float from  
 the keys  
 Float from the open'd lips of Louise;  
 But, alas! the sea-salt oozes through  
 The chinks of the tiles of the Closet  
 Blue;

*And ever the great bell overhead  
 Booms in the wind a knell for the dead.  
 The wind plays on it a knell for the  
 dead.*

### THEY SING ALL TOGETHER

How long ago was it, how long ago,  
 He came to this tower with hands full of  
 snow?

"Kneel down, O love Louise, kneel  
 down!" he said,  
 And sprinkled the dusty snow over my  
 head.

He watch'd the snow melting, it ran  
 through my hair,  
 Ran over my shoulders, white shoulders  
 and bare.

"I cannot weep for thee, poor love  
 Louise,  
 For my tears are all hidden deep under  
 the seas;



"In a gold and blue casket she keeps all  
my tears,  
But my eyes are no longer blue, as in old  
years ;

"Yea, they grow gray with time, grow  
small and dry,  
I am so feeble now, would I might die."

*And in truth the great bell overhead  
Left off his pealing for the dead,  
Perchance, because the wind was dead.*

Will he come back again, or is he dead ?  
O ! is he sleeping, my scarf round his  
head ?

Or did they strangle him as he lay there.  
With the long scarlet scarf I used to  
wear ?

Only I pray thee, Lord, let him come  
here !  
Both his soul and his body to me are  
most dear.

Dear Lord, that loves me, I wait to re-  
ceive  
Either body or spirit this wild Christmas-  
eve.

*Through the floor shot up a lily red,  
With a patch of earth from the land of  
the dead,  
For he was strong in the land of the dead.*

What matter that his cheeks were pale,  
His kind kiss'd lips all gray ?  
"O, love Louise, have you waited long ?"  
"O, my lord Arthur, yea."

What if his hair that brushed her cheek  
Was stiff with frozen rime ?  
His eyes were grown quite blue again,  
As in the happy time.

"O, love Louise, this is the key  
Of the happy golden land !  
O, sisters, cross the bridge with me,  
My eyes are full of sand.  
What matter that I cannot see,  
If ye take me by the hand ?"

*And ever the great bell overhead,  
And the tumbling seas mourn'd for the  
dead ;  
For their song ceased, and they were  
dead !* 1858.

#### THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

HAD she come all the way for this,  
To part at last without a kiss ?  
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain  
That her own eyes might see him slain  
Beside the haystack in the floods ?

Along the dripping leafless woods,  
The stirrup touching either shoe,  
She rode astride as troopers do ;  
With kirtle kilted to her knee,  
To which the mud splash'd wretchedly ;  
And the wet dripp'd from every tree  
Upon her head and heavy hair,  
And on her eyelids broad and fair ;  
The tears and rain ran down her face.

By fits and starts they rode apace,  
And very often was his place  
Far off from her ; he had to ride  
Ahead, to see what might betide  
When the roads cross'd ; and sometimes  
when

There rose a murmuring from his men.  
Had to turn back with promises.  
Ah me ! she had but little ease ;  
And often for pure doubt and dread  
She sobb'd, made giddy in the head  
By the swift riding ; while, for cold,  
Her slender fingers scarce could hold  
The wet reins ; yea, and scarcely, too,  
She felt the foot within her shoe  
Against the stirrup : all for this,  
To part at last without a kiss  
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they near'd that old soak'd  
hay,  
They saw across the only way  
That Judas, Godmar, and the three  
Red running lions dismally  
Grinn'd from his pennon, under which  
In one straight line along the ditch,  
They counted thirty heads.

So then  
While Robert turn'd round to his men.  
She saw at once the wretched end,  
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend  
Her coil the wrong way from her head.  
And hid her eyes ; while Robert said :  
" Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one :  
At Poitiers where we made them run  
So fast—why, sweet my love, good  
cheer.

The Gascon frontier is so near,  
Nought after us."

But : " O ! " she said.  
" My God ! my God ! I have to tread

The long way back without you ; then  
 The court at Paris ; those six men ;  
 The gratings of the Chatelet ;  
 The swift Seine on some rainy day  
 Like this, and people standing by,  
 And laughing, while my weak hands  
     try  
 To recollect how strong men swim.  
 All this, or else a life with him,  
 For which I should be damned at last,  
 Would God that this next hour were  
     past !”

He answer'd not, but cried his cry,  
 “ St. George for Marny ! ” cheerily ;  
 And laid his hand upon her rein.  
 Alas ! no man of all his train  
 Gave back that cheery cry again ;  
 And, while for rage his thumb beat fast  
 Upon his sword-hilt, some one cast  
 About his neck a kerchief long,  
 And bound him.

Then they went along  
 To Godmar ; who said : “ Now, Jehane,  
 Your lover's life is on the wane  
 So fast, that, if this very hour  
 You yield not as my paramour,  
 He will not see the rain leave off :  
 Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and  
     scoff  
 Sir Robert, or I slay you now.”

She laid her hand upon her brow,  
 Then gazed upon the palm, as though  
 She thought her forehead bled, and :  
     “ No ! ”

She said, and turn'd her head away,  
 As there was nothing else to say,  
 And everything was settled : red  
 Grew Godmar's face from chin to head :  
 “ Jehane, on yonder hill there stands  
 My castle, guarding well my lands ;  
 What hinders me from taking you,  
 And doing that I list to do  
 To your fair wilful body, while  
 Your knight lies dead ? ”

A wicked smile  
 Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,  
 A long way out she thrust her chin :  
 “ You know that I should strangle you  
 While you were sleeping ; or bite through  
 Your throat, by God's help : ah ! ” she  
     said,

“ Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid !  
 For in such wise they hem me in,  
 I cannot choose but sin and sin,  
 Whatever happens : yet I think  
 They could not make me eat or drink,  
 And so should I just reach my rest.”

“ Nay, if you do not my behest,  
 O Jehane ! though I love you well,”  
 Said Godmar, “ would I fail to tell  
 All that I know ? ” “ Foul lies,” she  
     said.

“ Eh ? lies, my Jehane ? by God's head,  
 At Paris folks would deem them true !  
 Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you :  
 ‘ Jehane the brown ! Jehane the brown !  
 Give us Jehane to burn or drown ! ’  
 Eh !—gag me Robert !—sweet my friend,  
 This were indeed a piteous end  
 For those long fingers, and long feet,  
 And long neck, and smooth shoulders  
     sweet ;

An end that few men would forget  
 That saw it. So, an hour yet :  
 Consider, Jehane, which to take  
 Of life or death ! ”

So, scarce awake,  
 Dismounting, did she leave that place,  
 And totter some yards : with her face  
 Turn'd upward to the sky she lay,  
 Her head on a wet heap of hay,  
 And fell asleep : and while she slept,  
 And did not dream, the minutes crept  
 Round to the twelve again ; but she,  
 Being waked at last, sigh'd quietly,  
 And strangely childlike came, and said :  
 “ I will not.” Straightway Godmar's  
     head,  
 As though it hung on strong wires,  
     turn'd  
 Most sharply round, and his face burn'd.

For Robert, both his eyes were dry,  
 He could not weep, but gloomily  
 He seem'd to watch the rain ; yea, too,  
 His lips were firm : he tried once more  
 To touch her lips ; she reach'd out, sore  
 And vain desire so tortured them,  
 The poor gray lips, and now the hem  
 Of his sleeve brush'd them.

With a start  
 Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart ;  
 From Robert's throat he loosed the  
     bands  
 Of silk and mail ; with empty hands  
 Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw,  
 The long bright blade without a flaw  
 Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his  
     hand

In Robert's hair ; she saw him bend  
 Back Robert's head ; she saw him send  
 The thin steel down ; the blow told well,  
 Right backward the knight Robert fell,  
 And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,  
 Unwitting, as I deem : so then  
 Godmar turn'd grinning to his men,

Who ran, some five or six, and beat  
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turn'd again and said :  
" So, Jehane, the first fitte is read !  
Take note, my lady, that your way  
Lies backward to the Chatelet !"  
She shook her head and gazed awhile  
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,  
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had  
Beside the haystack in the floods.  
1858.

### TWO RED ROSES ACROSS THE MOON

THERE was a lady lived in a hall,  
Large of her eyes and slim and tall ;  
And ever she sung from noon to noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

There was a knight came riding by  
In early spring, when the roads were dry ;  
And he heard that lady sing at the noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

Yet none the more he stopp'd at all,  
But he rode a-gallop past the hall ;  
And left that lady singing at noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

Because, forsooth, the battle was set,  
And the scarlet and blue had got to be  
met,  
He rode on the spur till the next warm  
noon :  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

But the battle was scatter'd from hill  
to hill,  
From the windmill to the watermill ;  
And he said to himself, as it near'd the  
noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

You scarce could see for the scarlet and  
blue,  
A golden helm or a golden shoe :  
So he cried, as the fight grew thick at  
the noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon !*

Verily then the gold bore through  
The huddled spears of the scarlet and  
blue ;  
And they cried, as they cut them down  
at the noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon !*

I trow he stopp'd when he rode again  
By the hall, though draggled sore with  
the rain ;  
And his lips were pinch'd to kiss at the  
noon  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

Under the may she stoop'd to the crown,  
All was gold, there was nothing of brown,  
And the horns blew up in the hallat noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.* 1858.

### SIR GILES' WAR-SONG<sup>1</sup>

*Ho ! is there any will ride with me,  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

The clink of arms is good to hear,  
The flap of pennons fair to see ;  
*Ho ! is there any will ride with me,  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

The leopards and lilies are fair to see ;  
St. George Guienne ! right good to hear :  
*Ho ! is there any will ride with me ;  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

I stood by the barrier,  
My coat being blazon'd fair to see ;  
*Ho ! is there any will ride with me,  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

Clisson put out his head to see,  
And lifted his basnet up to hear ;  
I pull'd him through the bars to me,  
*Sir Giles, le bon des barrières.*  
1858.

### NEAR AVALON

A SHIP with shields before the sun,  
Six maidens round the mast,  
A red-gold crown on every one,  
A green gown on the last.

The fluttering green banners there  
Are wrought with ladies' heads most  
fair,  
And a portraiture of Guenevere  
The middle of each sail doth bear.

A ship which sails before the wind,  
And round the helm six knights,

<sup>1</sup> Browning wrote to Morris, on the appearance of the *Earthly Paradise*: " It is a double delight to me to read such poetry, and know you, of all the world, wrote it,—you whose songs I used to sing while galloping by Fiesole in old days.—" *Ho, is there any will ride with me ?*"—(J. W. Mackail's *Life of William Morris*, Vol. I., p. 128.)

Their heaumes are on, whereby, half  
blind,  
They pass by many sights.

The tatter'd scarlet banners there,  
Right soon will leave the spear-heads  
bare,  
Those six knights sorrowfully bear,  
In all their heaumes some yellow hair.  
1858.

## IN PRISON

WEARILY, drearily,  
Half the day long,  
Flap the great banners  
High over the stone;  
Strangely and eerily  
Sounds the wind's song,  
Bending the banner-poles.

While, all alone,  
Watching the loophole's spark,  
Lie I, with life all dark,  
Feet tether'd, hands fetter'd  
Fast to the stone,  
The grim wall, square letter'd  
With prison'd men's groan.

Still strain the banner-poles  
Through the wind's song,  
Westward the banner rolls  
Over my wrong. 1858.

FROM THE LIFE AND DEATH OF  
JASON

## TO THE SEA

O BITTER sea, tumultuous sea,  
Full many an ill is wrought by thee!—  
Unto the wasters of the land  
Thou holdest out thy wrinkled hand;  
And when they leave the conquered  
town,

Whose black smoke makes thy surges  
brown,

Driven betwixt thee and the sun,  
As the long day of blood is done,  
From many a league of glittering waves  
Thou smilest on them and their slaves.

The thin bright-eyed Phœnician  
Thou drawest to thy waters wan,  
With ruddy eve and golden morn  
Thou temptest him, until, forlorn,  
Unburied, under alien skies  
Cast up ashore his body lies.

Yea, whose sees thee from his door,  
Must ever long for more and more;  
Nor will the beechen bowl suffice,

Or homespun robe of little price,  
Or hood well-woven from the fleece  
Undyed, or unsiced wine of Greece;  
So sore his heart is set upon  
Purple, and gold, and cinnamon;  
For as thou cravest, so he craves,  
Until he rolls beneath thy waves,  
Nor in some landlocked, unknown bay,  
Can satiate thee for one day.

Now, therefore, O thou bitter sea,  
With no long words we pray to thee,  
But ask thee, hast thou felt before  
Such strokes of the long ashen oar?  
And hast thou yet seen such a prow  
Thy rich and niggard waters plough?

Nor yet, O sea, shalt thou be cursed,  
If at thy hands we gain the worst,  
And, wrapt in water, roll about  
Blind-eyed, unheeding song or shout,  
Within thine eddies far from shore,  
Warmed by no sunlight any more.

Therefore, indeed, we joy in thee,  
And praise thy greatness, and will we  
Take at thy hands both good and ill,  
Yea, what thou wilt, and praise thee still,  
Enduring not to sit at home,  
And wait until the last days come,  
When we no more may care to hold  
White bosoms under crowns of gold,  
And our dulled hearts no longer are  
Stirred by the clangorous noise of war,  
And hope within our souls is dead,  
And no joy is remembered.

So, if thou hast a mind to slay,  
Fair prize thou hast of us to-day;  
And if thou hast a mind to save,  
Great praise and honor shalt thou have;  
But whatso thou wilt do with us,  
Our end shall not be piteous,  
Because our memories shall live  
When folk forget the way to drive  
The black keel through the heaped-up  
sea,  
And half dried up thy waters be. 1867.

THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS<sup>1</sup>

I know a little garden close  
Set thick with lily and red rose,  
Where I would wander if I might  
From dewy dawn to dewy night,  
And have one with me wandering.  
And though within it no birds sing,  
And though no pillared house is there,

<sup>1</sup> This song reappears under the title *A Garden by the Sea* in "Poems by the Way," 1891, with slight variations in the text, the most important of which is noted below.

And though the apple boughs are bare  
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,  
Her feet upon the green grass trod,  
And I beheld them as before.

There comes a murmur from the shore,  
And in the place two fair streams are,  
Drawn from the purple hills afar,  
Drawn down unto the restless sea ;  
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,  
The shore no ship has ever seen,  
Still beaten by the billows green,<sup>1</sup>  
Whose murmur comes unceasingly  
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,  
For which I let slip all delight,  
That maketh me both deaf and blind,  
Careless to win, unskilled to find,  
And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,  
Still have I left a little breath  
To seek within the jaws of death  
An entrance to that happy place,  
To seek the unforgotten face  
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from  
me

Anigh the murmuring of the sea. 1867.

#### ORPHEUS' SONG OF TRIUMPH

O death, that maketh life so sweet,  
O fear, with mirth before thy feet,  
What have ye yet in store for us,  
The conquerors, the glorious ?

Men say : " For fear that thou shouldst  
die

To-morrow, let to-day pass by  
Flower-crowned and singing," yet have  
we

Passed our to-day upon the sea,  
Or in a poisonous unknown land,  
With fear and death on either hand,  
And listless when the day was done  
Have scarcely hoped to see the sun  
Dawn on the morrow of the earth,  
Nor in our hearts have thought of  
mirth.

And while the world lasts, scarce again  
Shall any sons of men bear pain  
Like we have borne, yet be alive.

So surely not in vain we strive  
Like other men for our reward ;  
Sweet peace and deep, the checkered  
sword

Beneath the ancient mulberry trees,  
The smooth-paved gilded palaces,

<sup>1</sup> In *A Garden by the Sea*, these three lines  
read :

Dark hills whose heath-bloom feeds no bee,  
Dark shore no ship has ever seen,  
Tormented by the billows green.

Where the shy thin-clad damsels sweet  
Make music with their gold-ringed feet.  
The fountain court amidst of it,  
Where the short-haired slave-maidens  
sit,

While on the veined pavement lie  
The honied things and spicery  
Their arms have borne from out the  
town.

The dancers on the thymy down  
In summer twilight, when the earth  
Is still of all things but their mirth,  
And echoes borne upon the wind  
Of others in like way entwined.

The merchant-town's fair market-  
place,

Where over many a changing face  
The pigeons of the temple flit,  
And still the outland merchants sit  
Like kings above their merchandise,  
Lying to foolish men and wise.

Ah ! if they heard that we were come  
Into the bay, and bringing home  
That which all men have talked about,  
Some men with rage, and some with  
doubt,

Some with desire, and some with praise:  
Then would the people throng the ways,  
Nor heed the outland merchandise,  
Nor any talk, from fools or wise,  
But tales of our accomplished quest.

What soul within the house shall rest  
When we come home ? The wily king  
Shall leave his throne to see the thing:  
No man shall keep the landward gate.  
The hurried traveller shall wait  
Until our bulwarks graze the quay :  
Unslain the milk-white bull shall be  
Beside the quivering altar-flame :  
Scarce shall the maiden clasp for shame  
Over her breast the raiment thin  
The morn that Argo cometh in.

Then cometh happy life again  
That payeth well our toil and pain  
In that sweet hour, when all our woe  
But as a pensive tale we know,  
Nor yet remember deadly fear :  
For surely now if death be near,  
Unthought-of is it, and unseen  
When sweet is, that hath bitter been.  
1867.

#### SONGS OF ORPHEUS AND THE SIRENS

##### *Sirens*

O HAPPY seafarers are ye,  
And surely all your ills are past,  
And toil upon the land and sea.  
Since ye are brought to us at last.

To you the fashion of the world,  
Wide lands laid waste, fair cities  
burned,  
And plagues, and kings from kingdoms  
hurled,  
Are nought, since hither ye have  
turned.

For as upon this beach we stand,  
And o'er our heads the sea-fowl flit,  
Our eyes behold a glorious land,  
And soon shall ye be kings of it.

*Orpheus*

A little more, a little more,  
O carriers of the Golden Fleece,  
A little labor with the oar,  
Before we reach the land of Greece.

E'en now perchance faint rumors reach  
Men's ears of this our victory,  
And draw them down unto the beach  
To gaze across the empty sea.

But since the longed-for day is nigh,  
And scarce a God could stay us now,  
Why do ye hang your heads and sigh,  
Hindering for nought our eager prow?

*Sirens*

Ah, had ye chanced to reach the home  
On which your fond desires were set,  
Into what troubles had ye come?  
Short love and joy, and long regret.

But now, but now, when ye have lain  
Asleep with us a little while  
Beneath the washing of the main,  
How calm shall be your wakingsmile!

For ye shall smile to think of life  
That knows no troublous change or  
fear,  
No unavailing bitter strife,  
That ere its time brings trouble near.

*Orpheus*

Is there some murmur in your ears,  
That all that we have done is nought,  
And nothing ends our cares or fears,  
Till the last fear is on us brought?

*Sirens*

Alas! and will ye stop your ears,  
In vain desire to do aught,  
And wish to live 'mid cares and fears,  
Until the last fear makes you nought?

*Orpheus*

Is not the May-time now on earth,  
When close against the city wall  
The folks are singing in their mirth,  
While on their heads the May-flowers  
fall?

*Sirens*

Yes, May is come, and its sweet breath  
Shall well-nigh make you weep to-day,  
And pensive with swift-coming death,  
Shall ye be satiate of the May.

*Orpheus*

Shall not July bring fresh delight,  
As underneath green trees ye sit,  
And o'er some damsel's body white  
The noontide shadows change and  
flit?

*Sirens*

No new delight July shall bring  
But ancient fear and fresh desire,  
And spite of every lovely thing,  
Of July surely shall you tire.

*Orpheus*

And now, when August comes on thee,  
And 'mid the golden sea of corn  
The merry reapers thou mayst see,  
Wilt thou still think the earth forlorn?

*Sirens*

Set flowers upon thy short-lived head,  
And in thine heart forgetfulness  
Of man's hard toil, and scanty bread,  
And weary of those days no less.

*Orpheus*

Or wilt thou climb the sunny hill,  
In the October afternoon,  
To watch the purple earth's blood fill  
The gray vat to the maiden's tune?

*Sirens*

When thou beginnest to grow old,  
Bring back remembrance of thy bliss  
With that the shining cup doth hold,  
And weary helplessly of this.

*Orpheus*

Or pleasureless shall we pass by  
The long cold night and leaden day,  
That song, and tale, and minstrelsy  
Shall make as merry as the May?

*Sirens*

List then, to-night, to some old tale  
 Until the tears o'erflow thine eyes;  
 But what shall all these things avail,  
 When sad to-morrow comes and dies?

*Orpheus*

And when the world is born again,  
 And with some fair love, side by side,  
 Thou wanderest 'twixt the sun and rain,  
 In that fresh love-begetting tide;

Then, when the world is born again,  
 And the sweet world before thee lies,  
 Shall thy heart think of coming pain,  
 Or vex itself with memories?

*Sirens*

Ah! then the world is born again  
 With burning love unsatisfied,  
 And new desires fond and vain,  
 And weary days from tide to tide.

Ah! when the world is born again,  
 A little day is soon gone by,  
 When thou, unmoved by sun or rain,  
 Within a cold straight house shalt lie.

Ah, will ye go, and whither then  
 Will ye go from us, soon to die.  
 To fill your three-score years and ten,  
 With many an unnamed misery?

And this the wretchedest of all,  
 That when upon your lonely eyes  
 The last faint heaviness shall fall  
 Ye shall bethink you of our cries.

Come back, nor grown old, seek in vain  
 To hear us sing across the sea.  
 Come back, come back, come back again,  
 Come back, O fearful Minyae!

*Orpheus*

Ah, once again, ah, once again,  
 The black prow plunges through the sea,  
 Nor yet shall all your toil be vain,  
 Nor yet forgot, O Minyae. 1867.

## INVOCATION TO CHAUCER

(From the last book of the *Life and Death*  
 of Jason)

So ends the winning of the Golden  
 Fleece—

So ends the tale of that sweet rest and  
 peace

That unto Jason and his love befell:  
 Another story now my tongue must tell.  
 And tremble in the telling. Would  
 that I

Had but some portion of that mastery  
 That from the rose-hung lanes of woody  
 Kent

Through these five hundred years such  
 songs have sent

To us, who meshed within this smoky  
 net

Of unrejoicing labor, love them yet.

And thou, O Master!—Yea, my Master  
 still,

Whatever feet have scaled Parnassus'  
 hill,

Since like thy measures, clear and sweet  
 and strong,

Thames' stream scarce fettered drave the  
 dace along

Unto the bastioned bridge, his only  
 chain.—

O Master, pardon me, if yet in vain  
 Thou art my Master, and I fail to bring  
 Before men's eyes the image of the thing  
 My heart is filled with: thou whose  
 dreamy eyes

Beheld the flush to Cressid's cheeks arise,  
 When Troilus rode up the praising street.  
 As clearly as they saw thy townsmen  
 meet [stood

Those who in vineyards of Poictou with-  
 The glittering horror of the steel-topped  
 wood. 1867.

## AN APOLOGY

## PROLOGUE OF THE EARTHLY PARADISE

OF Heaven or Hell I have no power to  
 sing.

I cannot ease the burden of your fears.  
 Or make quick-coming death a little  
 thing,

Or bring again the pleasure of past years.  
 Nor for my words shall ye forget your  
 tears.

Or hope again for aught that I can say.  
 The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth.  
 From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh.  
 And, feeling kindly unto all the earth.  
 Grudge every minute as it passes by.  
 Made the more mindful that the sweet  
 days die—

—Remember me a little then I pray.  
 The idle singer of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due  
 time,  
 Why should I strive to set the crooked  
 straight?  
 Let it suffice me that my murmuring  
 rhyme  
 Beats with light wing against the ivory  
 gate,  
 Telling a tale not too importunate  
 To those who in the sleepy region stay,  
 Lulled by the singer of an empty day.  
 Folk say, a wizard to a northern king

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,  
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,  
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of  
bliss  
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,  
Where tossed about all hearts of men  
must be ;  
Whose ravening monsters mighty men  
shall slay,  
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

## ARGUMENT

THROUGH thick Arcadian woods a hunter  
went,  
Following the beasts upon a fresh spring  
day ;  
But since his horn-tipped bow but seldom  
bent,  
Now at the noontide nought had happed  
to slay,  
Within a vale he called his hounds away,  
Harkening the echoes of his lone voice  
clinging  
About the cliffs and through the beech-  
trees ring.

But when they ended, still awhile he  
stood,  
And but the sweet familiar thrush could  
hear,  
And all the day-long noises of the wood,  
And o'er the dry leaves of the vanished  
year  
His hounds' feet pattering as they drew  
near.

And heavy breathing from their heads  
low hung,  
To see the mighty cornel bow unstrung.

Then smiling did he turn to leave the  
place,  
But with his first step some new fleeting  
thought  
A shadow cast across his sun-burnt  
face ;  
I think the golden net that April  
brought  
From some warm world his wavering  
soul had caught ;  
For, sunk in vague sweet longing, did he  
go  
Betwixt the trees with doubtful steps  
and slow.

Yet howsoever slow he went, at last  
The trees grew sparser, and the wood  
was done ; [cast,  
Whereon one [farewell] backward look he



Then, turning round to see what place  
 was won,  
 With shaded eyes looked underneath the  
 sun,  
 And o'er green meads and new-turned  
 furrows brown  
 Beheld the gleaming of King Schoeneus'  
 town.

So thitherward he turned, and on each  
 side  
 The folk were busy on the teeming  
 land,  
 And man and maid from the brown fur-  
 rows cried,  
 Or midst the newly blossomed vines did  
 stand,  
 And as the rustic weapon pressed the  
 hand  
 Thought of the nodding of the well-filled  
 ear,  
 Or how the knife the heavy bunch should  
 shear.

Merry it was: about him sung the  
 birds,  
 The spring flowers bloomed along the  
 firm dry road,  
 The sleek-skinned mothers of the sharp-  
 horned herds  
 Now for the barefoot milking-maidens  
 lowed;  
 While from the freshness of his blue  
 abode,  
 Glad his death-bearing arrows to forget,  
 The broad sun blazed, nor scattered  
 plagues as yet.

Through such fair things unto the gates  
 he came,  
 And found them open, as though peace  
 were there;  
 Wherethrough, unquestioned of his  
 race or name,  
 He entered, and along the streets 'gan  
 fare,  
 Which at the first of folk were well-nigh  
 bare;  
 But pressing on, and going more hastily,  
 Men hurrying too he 'gan at last to see.

Following the last of these he still  
 pressed on,  
 Until an open space he came unto,  
 Where wreaths of fame had oft been lost  
 and won,  
 For feats of strength folks there were  
 wont to do.  
 And now our hunter looked for some-  
 thing new,

Because the whole wide space was bare,  
 and stilled  
 The high seats were, with eager people  
 filled.

There with the others to a seat he gat,  
 Whence he beheld a brodered canopy,  
 'Neath which in fair array King Schoeneus  
 sat  
 Upon his throne with councillors  
 thereby;  
 And underneath his well-wrought seat  
 and high,  
 He saw a golden image of the sun,  
 A silver image of the Fleet-foot One.

A brazen altar stood beneath their feet  
 Whereon a thin flame flicker'd in the  
 wind;  
 Nigh this a herald clad in raiment meet  
 Made ready even now his horn to wind,  
 By whom a huge man held a sword,  
 entwined  
 With yellow flowers; these stood a little  
 space  
 From off the altar, nigh the starting  
 place.

And there two runners did the sign  
 abide,  
 Foot set to foot,—a young man slim and  
 fair,  
 Crisp-hair'd, well knit, with firm limbs  
 often tried  
 In places where no man his strength may  
 spare:  
 Dainty his thin coat was, and on his hair  
 A golden circlet of renown he wore,  
 And in his hand an olive garland bore.

But on this day with whom shall he con-  
 tend?  
 A maid stood by him like Diana clad  
 When in the woods she lists her bow to  
 bend,  
 Too fair for one to look on and be glad,  
 Who scarcely yet has thirty summers  
 had,  
 If he must still behold her from afar;  
 Too fair to let the world live free from  
 war.

She seem'd all earthly matters to forget;  
 Of all tormenting lines her face was  
 clear;  
 Her wide gray eyes upon the goal were  
 set  
 Calm and unmov'd as though no soul were  
 near.

But her foe trembled as a man in fear,  
Nor from her loveliness one moment  
turn'd  
His anxious face with fierce desire that  
burn'd.

Now through the hush there broke the  
trumpet's clang  
Just as the setting sun made eventide,  
Then from light feet a spurt of dust  
there sprang,  
And swiftly were they running side by  
side;  
But silent did the thronging folk abide  
Until the turning-post was reach'd at  
last,  
And round about it still abreast they  
passed.

But when the people saw how close they  
ran,  
When half-way to the starting-point  
they were,  
A cry of joy broke forth, whereat the  
man  
Headed the white-foot runner, and drew  
near  
Unto the very end of all his fear;  
And scarce his straining feet the ground  
could feel,  
And bliss unhop'd for o'er his heart 'gan  
steal.

But 'midst the loud victorious shouts he  
heard  
Her footsteps drawing nearer, and the  
sound  
Of fluttering raiment, and thereat  
afear'd  
His flush'd and eager face he turn'd  
around,  
And even then he felt her past him  
bound  
Fleet as the wind, but scarcely saw her  
there  
Till on the goal she laid her fingers fair.

There stood she breathing like a little  
child  
Amid some warlike clamor laid asleep.  
For no victorious joy her red lips smil'd,  
Her cheek its wonted freshness did but  
keep;  
No glance lit up her clear gray eyes and  
deep,  
Though some divine thought soften'd all  
her face  
As once more rang the trumpet through  
the place.

But her late foe stopp'd short amidst his  
course,  
One moment gaz'd upon her piteously,  
Then with a groan his lingering feet did  
force

To leave the spot whence he her eyes  
could see;  
And, changed like one who knows his  
time must be  
But short and bitter, without any word  
He knelt before the bearer of the sword;

Then high rose up the gleaming deadly  
blade,  
Bar'd of its flowers, and through the  
crowded place  
Was silence now, and midst of it the  
maid  
Went by the poor wretch at a gentle  
pace,  
And he to hers upturn'd his sad white  
face;  
Nor did his eyes behold another sight  
Ere on his soul there fell eternal light.

So was the pageant ended, and all folk  
Talking of this and that familiar thing  
In little groups from that sad concourse  
broke,  
For now the shrill bats were upon the  
wing,  
And soon dark night would slay the  
evening,  
And in dark gardens sang the nightin-  
gale  
Her little-headed, oft-repeated tale.

And with the last of all the hunter went,  
Who, wondering at the strange sight he  
had seen,  
Prayed an old man to tell him what it  
meant,  
Both why the vanquished man so slain  
had been,  
And if the maiden were an earthly  
queen,  
Or rather what much more she seemed  
to be,  
No sharer in this world's mortality.

"Stranger," said he, "I pray she soon  
may die  
Whose lovely youth has slain so many  
an one!  
King Schoeneus' daughter is she verily,  
Who when her eyes first looked upon the  
sun  
Was fain to end her life but new begun,

For he had vowed to leave but men  
alone  
Sprung from his loins when he from  
earth was gone.

"Therefore he bade one leave her in  
the wood,  
And let wild things deal with her as  
they might,  
But this being done, some cruel god  
thought good  
To save her beauty in the world's  
despite;  
Folk say that her, so delicate and white  
As now she is, a rough root-grubbing  
bear  
Amidst her shapeless cubs at first did  
rear.

"In course of time the woodfolk slew  
her nurse,  
And to their rude abode the youngling  
brought,  
And reared her up to be a kingdom's  
curse;  
Who grown a woman, of no kingdom  
thought,  
But armed and swift, 'mid beasts de-  
struction wrought,  
Nor spared two shaggy centaur kings to  
slay  
To whom her body seemed an easy prey.

"So to this city, led by fate, she came  
Whom known by signs, whereof I  
cannot tell,  
King Schoeneus for his child at last did  
claim.  
Nor otherwhere since that day doth she  
dwell  
Sending too many a noble soul to hell—  
What! thine eyes glisten! what then,  
thinkest thou  
Her shining head unto the yoke to bow?

"Listen, my son, and love some other  
maid  
For she the saffron gown will never  
wear,  
And on no flower-strewn couch shall  
she be laid,  
Nor shall her voice make glad a lover's  
ear:  
Yet if of Death thou hast not any fear,  
Yea, rather, if thou lov'st him utterly,  
Thou still may'st woo her ere thou  
com'st to die,

"Like him that on this day thou sawest  
lie dead;

For, fearing as I deem the sea-born one,  
The maid has vowed e'en such a mate  
wed  
As in the course her swift feet cannot  
run,  
But whoso fails herein, his days are  
done:  
He came the nighest that was slain to-  
day,  
Although with him I deem she did but  
play.

"Behold, such mercy Atalanta gives  
To those that long to win her loveliness;  
Be wise! be sure that many a maid there  
lives  
Gentler than she, of beauty little less,  
Whose swimming eyes thy loving work  
shall bless,  
When in some garden, knees set close to  
knee,  
Thou sing'st the song that love may  
teach to thee."

So to the hunter spake that ancient man,  
And left him for his own home pre-  
sently:  
But he turned round, and through the  
moonlight wan  
Reached the thick wood, and there  
'twixt tree and tree  
Distraught he passed the long night  
feverishly,  
'Twixt sleep and waking, and at dawn  
arose  
To wage hot war against his speechless  
foes.

There to the hart's flank seemed his  
shaft to grow,  
As panting down the broad green glades  
he flew,  
There by his horn the Dryads well might  
know  
His thrust against the bear's heart had  
been true,  
And there Adonis' bane his javelin slew.  
But still in vain through rough and  
smooth he went,  
For none the more his restlessness was  
spent.

So wandering, he to Argive cities came,  
And in the lists with valiant men he  
stood,  
And by great deeds he won him praise  
and fame,  
And heaps of wealth for little-valued  
blood;

But none of all these things, or life,  
 seemed good  
 Unto his heart, where still unsatisfied  
 A ravenous longing warred with fear  
 and pride.

Therefore it happed when but a month  
 had gone

Since he had left King Schoeneus' city  
 old,

In hunting-gear again, again alone  
 The forest-bordered meads did he behold,  
 Where still mid thoughts of August's  
 quivering gold

Folk hoed the wheat, and clipped the  
 vine in trust

Of faint October's purple-foaming must.

And once again he passed the peaceful  
 gate.

While to his beating heart his lips did  
 lie,

That owning not victorious love and fate,  
 Said, half aloud, "And here too must I  
 try,

To win of alien men the mastery,  
 And gather for my head fresh meed of  
 fame

And cast new glory on my father's  
 name."

In spite of that, how beat his heart,  
 when first

Folk said to him, "And art thou come  
 to see

That which still makes our city's name  
 accurst

Among all mothers for its cruelty?  
 Then know indeed that fate is good to  
 thee

Because to-morrow a new luckless one  
 Against the whitefoot maid is pledged  
 to run."

So on the morrow with no curious eyes  
 As once he did, that piteous sight he  
 saw,

Nor did that wonder in his heart arise  
 As toward the goal the conquering maid  
 'gan draw,

Nor did he gaze upon her eyes with awe,  
 Too full the pain of longing filled his  
 heart

For fear or wonder there to have a part.

But O, how long the night was ere it  
 went!

How long it was before the dawn begun  
 Showed to the wakening birds the sun's  
 intent

That not in darkness should the world  
 be done!

And then, and then, how long before  
 the sun

Bade silently the toilers of the earth  
 Get forth to fruitless cares or empty  
 mirth!

And long it seemed that in the market-  
 place

He stood and saw the chaffering folk  
 go by,

Ere from the ivory throne King Schoe-  
 neus' face

Looked down upon the murmur royally,  
 But then came trembling that the time  
 was nigh

When he midst pitying looks his love  
 must claim,

And jeering voices must salute his name.

But as the throng he pierced to gain the  
 throne,

His alien face distraught and anxious  
 told

What hopeless errand he was bound  
 upon,

And, each to each, folk whispered to  
 behold

His godlike limbs; nay, and one woman  
 old

As he went by must pluck him by the  
 sleeve

And pray him yet that wretched love to  
 leave.

For sidling up she said, "Canst thou  
 live twice,

Fair son? canst thou have joyful youth  
 again,

That thus thou goest to the sacrifice  
 Thyself the victim? nay then, all in vain

Thy mother bore her longing and her  
 pain,

And one more maiden on the earth must  
 dwell

Hopeless of joy, nor fearing death and  
 hell.

"O, fool, thou knowest not the compact  
 then

That with the three-formed goddess she  
 has made

To keep her from the loving lips of men,  
 And in no saffron gown to be arrayed,

And therewithal with glory to be paid,  
 And love of her the moonlit river sees

White 'gainst the shadow of the formless  
 trees.

"Come back, and I myself will pray  
for thee  
Unto the sea-born framer of delights,  
To give thee her who on the earth may be  
The fairest stirrer up to death and fights,  
To quench with hopeful days and joyous  
nights  
The flame that doth thy youthful heart  
consume:  
Come back, nor give thy beauty to the  
tomb."

How should he listen to her earnest  
speech?  
Words, such as he not once or twice had  
said  
Unto himself, whose meaning scarce  
could reach  
The firm abode of that sad hardihead—  
He turned about, and through the  
marketstead  
Swiftly he passed, until before the  
throne  
In the cleared space he stood at last  
alone.

Then said the King, "Stranger, what  
dost thou here?  
Have any of my folk done ill to thee?  
Or art thou of the forest men in fear?  
Or art thou of the sad fraternity  
Who still will strive my daughter's mates  
to be,  
Staking their lives to win an earthly  
bliss,  
The lonely maid, the friend of Artemis?"

"O King," he said "thou sayest the  
word indeed;  
Nor will I quit the strife till I have won  
My sweet delight, or death to end my  
need.  
And know that I am called Milanion,  
Of King Amphidamas the well-loved  
son:  
So fear not that to thy old name, O King,  
Much loss or shame my victory will  
bring."

"Nay, Prince," said Schoeneus, "wel-  
come to this land  
Thou wert indeed, if thou wert here to  
try  
Thy strength 'gainst some one mighty  
of his hand;  
Nor would we grudge thee well-won  
mastery.  
But now, why wilt thou come to me to  
die,

And at my door lay down thy luckless  
head,  
Swelling the band of the unhappy dead,

"Whose curses even now my heart doth  
fear?  
Lo, I am old, and know what life can be,  
And what a bitter thing is death afar.  
O, Son! be wise, and harken unto me,  
And if no other can be dear to thee,  
At least as now, yet is the world full  
wide,  
And bliss in seeming hopeless hearts may  
hide:

"But if thou lovest life, then all is  
lost."  
"Nay, King," Milanion said, "thy words  
are vain.  
Doubt not that I have counted well the  
cost.  
But say, on what day wilt thou that I  
gain  
Fulfilled delight, or death to end my  
pain.  
Right glad were I if it could be to-day,  
And all my doubts at rest for ever lay."

"Nay," said King Schoeneus, "thus it  
shall not be,  
But rather shalt thou let a month go by,  
And weary with thy prayers for victory  
What god thou know'st the kindest and  
most nigh.  
So doing, still perchance thou shalt not  
die:  
And with my goodwill wouldst thou  
have the maid,  
For of the equal gods I grow afraid.

"And until then, O Prince, be thou my  
guest,  
And all these troublous things awhile  
forget."

"Nay," said he, "couldst thou give my  
soul good rest,  
And on mine head a sleepy garland set.  
Then had I 'scaped the meshes of the  
net. [word:  
Nor shouldst thou hear from me another  
But now, make sharp thy fearful head-  
ing-sword.

"Yet will I do what son of man may do,  
And promise all the gods may most  
desire.  
That to myself I may at least be true:  
And on that day my heart and limbs so  
tire,

With utmost strain and measureless desire,  
That, at the worst, I may but fall asleep  
When in the sunlight round that sword  
shall sweep."

He went therewith, nor anywhere would  
bide,

But unto Argos restlessly did wend ;  
And there, as one who lays all hope aside,  
Because the leech has said his life must  
end,

Silent farewell he bade to foe and friend,  
And took his way unto the restless sea,  
For there he deemed his rest and help  
might be.

UPON the shore of Argolis there stands  
A temple to the goddess that he sought,  
That, turned unto the lion-bearing lands,  
Fenced from the east, of cold winds hath  
no thought,

Though to no homestead there the  
sheaves are brought,

No groaning press torments the close-  
clipped murk,

Lonely the fane stands, far from all men's  
work.

Pass through a close, set thick with  
myrtle-trees,

Through the brass doors that guard the  
holy place,

And entering, hear the washing of the  
seas

That twice a-day rise high above the base,  
And with the south-west urging them,  
embrace

The marble feet of her that standeth  
there

That shrink not, naked though they be  
and fair.

Small is the fane through which the sea-  
wind sings

About Queen Venus' well-wrought image  
white,

But hung around are many precious  
things,

The gifts of those who, longing for de-  
light,

Have hung them there within the god-  
dess' sight,

And in return have taken at her hands  
The living treasures of the Grecian lands.

And thither now has come Milanion,  
And showed unto the priests' wide open  
eyes

Gifts fairer than all those that there  
have shone.

Silk cloths, inwrought with Indian  
fantasies,

And bowls inscribed with sayings of the  
wise

Above the deeds of foolish living things ;  
And mirrors fit to be the gifts of kings.

And now before the Sea-born One he  
stands,

By the sweet veiling smoke made dim  
and soft,

And while the incense trickles from his  
hands,

And while the odorous smoke-wreaths  
hang aloft,

Thus doth he pray to her : " O Thou,  
who oft

Hast holpen man and maid in their dis-  
tress

Despise me not for this my wretchedness !

" O goddess, among us who dwell below,  
Kings and great men, great for a little  
while,

Have pity on the lowly heads that bow,  
Nor hate the hearts that love them with-  
out guile ;

Wilt thou be worse than these, and is  
thy smile

A vain device of him who set thee here,  
An empty dream of some artificer ?

" O great one, some men love, and are  
ashamed ;

Some men are weary of the bonds of love ;  
Yea, and by some men lightly art thou  
blamed,

That from thy toils their lives they can-  
not move,

And 'mid the ranks of men their man-  
hood prove.

Alas ! O goddess, if thou slayest me  
What new immortal can I serve but thee ?

" Think then, will it bring honor to thy  
head

If folk say, ' Everything aside he cast  
And to all fame and honor was he dead,  
And to his one hope now is dead at last,  
Since all unholpen he is gone and past :  
Ah, the gods love not man, for certainly,  
He to his helper did not cease to cry. '

" Nay, but thou wilt help ; they who died  
before

Not single-hearted as I deem came here,  
Therefore unthanked they laid their  
gifts before

Thy stainless feet, still shivering with  
their fear,  
Lest in their eyes their true thought  
might appear,  
Who sought to be the lords of that fair  
town,  
Dreaded of men and winners of renown.

"O Queen, thou knowest I pray not for  
this :

O set us down together in some place  
Where not a voice can break our heaven  
of bliss,

Where nought but rocks and I can see  
her face,

Softening beneath the marvel of thy  
grace,

Where not a foot our vanished steps can  
track—

The golden age, the golden age come  
back!

"O fairest, hear me now who do thy  
will,

Plead for thy rebel that she be not slain,  
But live and love and be thy servant  
still;

Ah, give her joy and take away my pain,  
And thus two long-enduring servants  
gain.

An easy thing this is to do for me,  
What need of my vain words to weary  
thee.

"But none the less, this place will I not  
leave

Until I needs must go my death to meet,  
Or at thy hands some happy sign receive  
That in great joy we twain may one day  
greet

Thy presence here and kiss thy silver feet,  
Such as we deem thee, fair beyond all  
words,

Victorious o'er our servants and our  
lords."

Then from the altar back a space he  
drew,

But from the Queen turned not his face  
away.

But 'gainst a pillar leaned, until the blue  
That arched the sky, at ending of the  
day,

Was turned to ruddy gold and changing  
gray.

And clear, but low, the nigh-ebbed  
windless sea

In the still evening murmured cease-  
lessly.

And there he stood when all the sun was  
down,

Nor had he moved, when the dim golden  
light,

Like the far lustre of a godlike town,  
Had left the world to seeming hopeless

night,  
Nor would he move the more when was  
moonlight

Streamed through the pillars for a little  
while,

And lighted up the white Queen's change-  
less smile.

Nought noted he the shallow-flowing sea  
As step by step it set the wrack a-swim;

The yellow torchlight nothing noted he  
Wherein with fluttering gown and half-  
bared limb

The temple damsels sung their midnight  
hymn;

And nought the doubled stillness of the  
fane

When they were gone and all was hushed  
again.

But when the waves had touched the  
marble base,

And steps the fish swim over twice a-day,  
The dawn beheld him sunken in his

place  
Upon the floor; and sleeping there he  
lay,

Not heeding aught the little jets of spray  
The roughened sea brought nigh, across

him cast,  
For as one dead all thought from him  
had passed.

Yet long before the sun had showed his  
head,

Long ere the varied hangings on the  
wall

Had gained once more their blue and  
green and red,

He rose as one some well-known sign  
doth call

When war upon the city's gates doth  
fall,

And scarce like one fresh risen out of  
sleep,

He 'gan again his broken watch to keep.

Then he turned round; not for the sea-  
gull's cry

That wheeled above the temple in his  
flight,

Not for the fresh south wind that her-  
ingly

Breathed on the new-born day and dying  
 night,  
 But some strange hope 'twixt fear and  
 great delight  
 Drew round his face, now flushed, now  
 pale and wan,  
 And still constrained his eyes the sea to  
 scan.

Now a faint light lit up the southern sky  
 Not sun or moon, for all the world was  
 gray,  
 But this a bright cloud seemed, that  
 drew anigh,  
 Lighting the dull waves that beneath it  
 lay  
 As toward the temple still it took its  
 way,  
 And still grew greater, till Milanion  
 Saw nought for dazzling light that round  
 him shone.

But as he staggered with his arms out-  
 spread,  
 Delicious unnamed odors breathed  
 around,  
 For languid happiness he bowed his head,  
 And with wet eyes sank down upon the  
 ground,  
 Nor wished for aught, nor any dream he  
 found  
 To give him reason for that happiness,  
 Or make him ask more knowledge of his  
 bliss.

At last his eyes were cleared, and he  
 could see  
 Through happy tears the goddess face to  
 face  
 With that faint image of Divinity,  
 Whose well-wrought smile and dainty  
 changeless grace  
 Until that morn so gladdened all the  
 place :  
 Then he, unwitting cried aloud her name  
 And covered up his eyes for fear and  
 shame.

But through the stillness he her voice  
 could hear  
 Piercing his heart with joy scarce bear-  
 able,  
 That said, "Milanion, wherefore dost  
 thou fear,  
 I am not hard to those who love me  
 well ;  
 List to what I a second time will tell,  
 And thou mayest hear perchance, and  
 live to save  
 The cruel maiden from a loveless grave.

"See, by my feet three golden apples  
 lie—

Such fruit among the heavy roses falls,  
 Such fruit my watchful danisels care-  
 fully

Store up within the best loved of my  
 walls,

Ancient Damascus, where the lover calls  
 Above my unseen head, and faint and  
 light

The rose-leaves flutter round me in the  
 night.

"And note, that these are not alone most  
 fair

With heavenly gold, but longing strange  
 they bring

Unto the hearts of men, who will not  
 care

Beholding these, for any once-loved thing  
 Till round the shining sides their fingers  
 cling.

And thou shalt see thy well-girt swift-  
 foot maid

By sight of these amidst her glory stayed.

"For bearing these within a scrip with  
 thee,

When first she heads thee from the  
 starting-place

Cast down the first one for her eyes to  
 see,

And when she turns aside make on  
 apace,

And if again she heads thee in the race  
 Spare not the other two to cast aside

If she not long enough behind will bide.

"Farewell, and when has come the  
 happy time

That she Diana's raiment must unbind  
 And all the world seems blessed with  
 Saturn's clime,

And thou with eager arms about her  
 twined

Beholdest first her gray eyes growing  
 kind,

Surely, O trembler, thou shalt scarcely  
 then

Forget the Helper of unhappy men."

Milanion raised his head at this last  
 word

For now so soft and kind she seemed to  
 be

No longer of her Godhead was he feared ;  
 Too late he looked ; for nothing could  
 he see

But the white image glimmering doubt-  
 fully



In the departing twilight cold and gray,  
And those three apples on the step that  
lay.

These then he caught up quivering with  
delight,  
Yet fearful lest it all might be a dream :  
And though aweary with the watchful  
night,  
And sleepless nights of longing, still did  
deem  
He could not sleep ; but yet the first  
sunbeam  
That smote the fane across the heaving  
deep  
Shone on him laid in calm, untroubled  
sleep.

But little ere the noontide did he rise,  
And why he felt so happy scarce could  
tell  
Until the gleaming apples met his eyes.  
Then leaving the fair place where this  
befell  
Oft he looked back as one who loved it  
well,  
Then homeward to the haunts of men,  
'gan wend  
To bring all things unto a happy end.

Now has the lingering month at last  
gone by,  
Again are all folk round the running  
place.  
Nor other seems the dismal pageantry  
Than heretofore, but that another face  
Looks o'er the smooth course ready for  
the race,  
For now, beheld of all, Milanion  
Stands on the spot he twice has look'd  
upon.

But yet—what change is this that holds  
the maid ?  
Does she indeed see in his glittering eye  
More than disdain of the sharp shearing  
blade,  
Some happy hope of help and victory ?  
The others seem'd to say, " We come to  
die :  
Look down upon us for a little while,  
That, dead, we may bethink us of thy  
smile."

But he—what look of mastery was this  
He cast on her ? why were his lips so red :  
Why was his face so flush'd with hap-  
piness ?

So looks not one who deems himself but  
dead,  
E'en if to death he bows a willing head ;  
So rather looks a god well pleas'd to find  
Some earthly damsel fashion'd to his  
mind.

Why must she drop her lids before his  
gaze,  
And even as she casts adown her eyes  
Redden to note his eager glance of praise,  
And wish that she were clad in other  
guise ?  
Why must the memory to her heart arise  
Of things unnoticed when they first were  
heard,  
Some lover's song, some answering  
maiden's word ?

What makes these longings, vague,  
without a name,  
And this vain pity never felt before.  
This sudden languor, this contempt of  
fame,  
This tender sorrow for the time past o'er,  
These doubts that grow each minute  
more and more ?  
Why does she tremble as the time grows  
near,  
And weak defeat and woeful victory  
fear ?

But while she seem'd to hear her beat-  
ing heart,  
Above their heads the trumpet blast rang  
out  
And forth they sprang, and she must  
play her part ;  
Then flew her white feet, knowing not a  
doubt,  
Though, slackening once, she turn'd her  
head about,  
But then she cried aloud and faster fled  
Than e'er before, and all men deemed  
him dead.

But with no sound he raised aloft his  
hand,  
And thence what seemed a ray of light  
there flew  
And past the maid rolled on along the  
sand ;  
Then trembling she her feet together  
drew  
And in her heart a strong desire there  
grew  
To have the toy : some god she thought  
had given [heaven.  
That gift to her, to make of earth

Then from the course with eager steps  
 she ran,  
 And in her odorous bosom laid the gold.  
 But when she turned again, the great-  
 limbed man,  
 Now well ahead she failed not to behold,  
 And mindful of her glory waxing cold,  
 Sprang up and followed him in hot  
 pursuit,  
 Though with one hand she touched the  
 golden fruit.

Note too, the bow that she was wont to  
 bear  
 She laid aside to grasp the glittering  
 prize,  
 And o'er her shoulder from the quiver  
 fair  
 Three arrows fell and lay before her eyes  
 Unnoticed, as amidst the people's cries  
 She sprang to head the strong Milanion,  
 Who now the turning-post had well-nigh  
 won.

But as he set his mighty hand on it  
 White fingers underneath his own were  
 laid,  
 And white limbs from his dazzled eyes  
 did flit,  
 Then he the second fruit cast by the  
 maid:  
 She ran awhile, and then as one afraid  
 Wavered and stopped, and turned and  
 made no stay.  
 Until the globe with its bright fellow  
 lay.

Then, as a troubled glance she cast  
 around,  
 Now far ahead the Argive could she see,  
 And in her garment's hem one hand she  
 wound  
 To keep the double prize, and stren-  
 uously  
 Sped o'er the course, and little doubt  
 had she  
 To win the day, though now but scanty  
 space  
 Was left betwixt him and the winning  
 place.

Short was the way unto such winged  
 feet.  
 Quickly she gained upon him till at last  
 He turned about her eager eyes to meet  
 And from his hand the third fair apple  
 cast.  
 She wavered not, but turned and ran so  
 fast

After the prize that should her bliss sui-  
 fl.

That in her hand it lay ere it was still.

Nor did she rest, but turned about to  
 win

Once more, an unblest woeful victory—  
 And yet—and yet—why does her breath  
 begin

To fail her, and her feet drag heavily?  
 Why fails she now to see if far or nigh  
 The goal is? why do her gray eyes grow  
 dim?

Why do these tremors run through every  
 limb?

She spreads her arms abroad some stay  
 to find

Else must she fall, indeed, and findeth  
 this,

A strong man's arms about her body  
 twined.

Nor may she shudder now to feel his  
 kiss,

So wrapped she is in new unbroken  
 bliss:

Made happy that the foe the prize hath  
 won,

She weeps glad tears for all her glory  
 done.

SHATTER the trumpet, hew adown the  
 posts!

Upon the brazen altar break the sword,  
 And scatter incense to appease the  
 ghosts

Of those who died here by their own  
 award.

Bring forth the image of the mighty  
 Lord,

And her who unseen o'er the runners  
 hung,

And did a deed for ever to be sung.

Here are the gathered folk; make no  
 delay,

Open King Schœneus' well-filled trea-  
 sury.

Bring out the gifts long hid from light  
 of day,

The golden bowls o'erwrought with  
 imagery,

Gold chains, and unguents brought  
 from over sea.

The saffron gown the old Phœnician  
 brought,

Within the temple of the Goddess  
 wrought.

O ye, O damsels, who shall never see  
 Her, that Love's servant bringeth now  
 to you,  
 Returning from another victory,  
 In some cool bower do all that now is  
 due!

Since she in token of her service new  
 Shall give to Venus offerings rich enow,  
 Her maiden zone, her arrows and her  
 bow. 1868.

#### SONG FROM THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

O PENSIVE, tender maid, downcast and  
 shy,  
 Who turnest pale e'en at the name of  
 love,  
 And with flushed face must pass the  
 elm-tree by,  
 Ashamed to hear the passionate gray  
 dove  
 Moan to his mate, thee too the god  
 shall move,  
 Thee too the maidens shall ungird one  
 day,  
 And with thy girdle put thy shame  
 away.

What, then, and shall white winter  
 ne'er be done  
 Because the glittering frosty morn is  
 fair?  
 Because against the early-setting sun  
 Bright show the gilded boughs, though  
 waste and bare?  
 Because the robin singeth free from  
 care?  
 Ah! these are memories of a better day  
 When on earth's face the lips of sum-  
 mer lay.

Come, then, beloved one, for such as  
 thee  
 Love loveth, and their hearts he know-  
 eth well,  
 Who hoard their moments of felicity.  
 As misers hoard the medals that they  
 tell,  
 Lest on the earth but paupers they  
 should dwell:  
 "We hide our love to bless another day;  
 The world is hard, youth passes quick,"  
 they say.

Ah, little ones, but if ye could forget  
 Amidst your outpoured love that you  
 must die, [querors yet.  
 Then ye, my servants, were death's con-

And love to you should be eternity,  
 How quick soever might the days go by:  
 Yes, ye are made immortal on the day  
 Ye cease the dusty grains of time to  
 weigh.

Thou harkenest, love? O make no  
 semblance then  
 That thou art loved, but as thy custom  
 is  
 Turn thy gray eyes away from eyes of  
 men.  
 With hands down-dropped, that tremble  
 with thy bliss,  
 With hidden eyes, take thy first lover's  
 kiss;  
 Call this eternity which is to-day,  
 Nor dream that this our love can pass  
 away. 1868.

#### JUNE

O JUNE, O June, that we desired so,  
 Wilt thou not make us happy on this  
 day?  
 Across the river thy soft breezes blow  
 Sweet with the scent of beanfields far  
 away,  
 Above our heads rustle the aspens gray,  
 Calm is the sky with harmless clouds  
 beset,  
 No thought of storm the morning vexes  
 yet.

See, we have left our hopes and fears be-  
 hind  
 To give our very hearts up unto thee:  
 What better place than this then could  
 we find  
 By this sweet stream that knows not of  
 the sea,  
 That guesses not the city's misery,  
 This little stream whose hamlets scarce  
 have names,  
 This far-off, lonely mother of the  
 Thames?

Here then, O June, thy kindness will  
 we take;  
 And if indeed but pensive men we seem,  
 What should we do? thou wouldst not  
 have us wake  
 From out the arms of this rare happy  
 dream  
 And wish to leave the murmur of the  
 stream,  
 The rustling boughs, the twitter of the  
 birds,  
 And all thy thousand peaceful happy  
 words. 1868.

## AUGUST

ACROSS the gap made by our English  
hinds,  
Amidst the Roman's handiwork, behold  
Far off the long-roofed church; the  
shepherd binds  
The withy round the hurdles of his fold,  
Down in the foss the river fed of old,  
That through long lapse of time has  
grown to be  
The little grassy valley that you see.

Rest here awhile, not yet the eve is  
still,  
The bees are wandering yet, and you  
may hear  
The barley mowers on the trenchéd hill,  
The sheep-bells, and the restless chang-  
ing weir,  
All little sounds made musical and clear  
Beneath the sky that burning August  
gives,  
While yet the thought of glorious Sum-  
mer lives.

Ah, love! such happy days, such days  
as these,  
Must we still waste them, craving for  
the best,  
Like lovers o'er the painted images  
Of those who once their yearning hearts  
have blessed?  
Have we been happy on our day of  
rest?  
Thine eyes say "yes,"—but if it came  
again,  
Perchance its ending would not seem so  
vain. 1868.

## SONG FROM OGIER THE DANE

## HÆC

IN the white-flowered hawthorn brake,  
Love, be merry for my sake;  
Twine the blossoms in my hair,  
Kiss me where I am most fair—  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death?

## ILLE

Nay, the garlanded gold hair  
Hides thee where thou art most fair;  
Hides the rose-tinged hills of snow—  
Ah, sweet love, I have thee now!  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death?

## HÆC

Shall we weep for a dead day,  
Or set Sorrow in our way?  
Hidden by my golden hair,  
Wilt thou weep that sweet days wear?  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death?

## ILLE

Weep, O Love, the days that flit,  
Now, while I can feel thy breath;  
Then may I remember it  
Sad and old, and near my death.  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death? 1868.

SONG FROM THE STORY OF ACON-  
TIUS AND CYDIPPE

FAIR is the night and fair the day,  
Now April is forgot of May,  
Now into June May falls away;  
Fair day, fair night, O give me back  
The tide that all fair things did lack  
Except my love, except my sweet!

Blow back, O wind! thou art not kind,  
Though thou art sweet; thou hast no  
mind  
Her hair about my sweet to wind;  
O flowery sward, though thou art bright,  
I praise thee not for thy delight,  
Thou hast not kissed her silver feet.

Thou know'st her not, O rustling tree,  
What dost thou then to shadow me,  
Whose shade her breast did never see?  
O flowers, in vain ye bow adown!  
Ye have not felt her odorous gown  
Brush past your heads my lips to meet.

Flow on, great river—thou mayst deem  
That far away, a summer stream,  
Thou sawest her limbs amidst thee gleam  
And kissed her foot, and kissed her knee,  
Yet get thee swift unto the sea!  
With nought of true thou wilt me greet.

And thou that men call by my name,  
O helpless one, hast thou no shame  
That thou must even look the same,  
As while ago, as while ago,  
When thou and she were left alone,  
And hands, and lips, and tears did meet?

Grow weak and pine, lie down to die,  
O body in thy misery,  
Because short time and sweet goes by;

O foolish heart, how weak thou art!  
 Break, break, because thou needs must  
     part  
 From thine own love, from thine own  
     sweet! 1870.

## L'ENVOI

## THE EARTHLY PARADISE

HERE are we for the last time face to  
     face.

Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee speed  
 Upon thy perilous journey to that place  
 For which I have done on thee pilgrim's  
     weed,

Striving to get thee all things for thy  
     need—

—I love thee, whatso time or men may  
     say

Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en  
     if thou

Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears  
     on;

For ever as thy fashioning did grow,  
 Kind word and praise because of thee I  
     won

From those without whom were my  
     world all gone,

My hope fallen dead, my singing cast  
     away.

And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee; yet this last time must it be  
 That thou must hold thy peace and I  
     must speak.

Lest if thou babble I begin to see  
 Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart  
     too weak,

To find the land thou goest forth to  
     seek—

—Though what harm if thou die upon  
     the way,

Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never  
     reach,

Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet,  
     or death;

Therefore a word unto thee would I teach  
 To answer these, who, noting thy weak  
     breath,

Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little  
     faith,

May make thy fond desire a sport and  
     play

Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the  
     road thereto?

Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou  
     know'st it not;

Surely no book of verse I ever knew  
 But ever was the heart within him hot  
 To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot—

—There, now we both laugh—as the  
     whole world may,

At us poor singers of an empty day.

Nay, let it pass, and harken! Hast  
     thou heard

That therein I believe I have a friend,  
 Of whom for love I may not be afraid?  
 It is to him indeed I bid thee wend:

Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere  
     thou end,

Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,  
 Thou idle singer of an empty day!

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the  
     road,

And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,  
 Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load,

My Master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou  
     do meet,

Then shalt thou win a space of rest full  
     sweet;

Then be thou bold, and speak the words  
     I say,

The idle singer of an empty day!

“O Master, O thou great of heart and  
     tongue,

Thou well mayst ask me why I wander  
     here,

In raiment rent of stories oft besung!  
 But of thy gentleness draw thou anear.

And then the heart of one who held thee  
     dear

Mayst thou behold! So near as that I lay  
 Unto the singer of an empty day.

“For this he ever said, who sent me  
     forth

To seek a place amid thy company:  
 That howsoever little was my worth.

Yet was he worth e'en just so much as  
     I;

He said that rhyme hath little skill to  
     lie;

Nor feigned to cast his worsen part away:  
 In idle singing for an empty day.

“I have beheld him tremble oft enough  
 At things he could not choose but trust

to me.

Although he knew the world was wise  
     and rough;

And never did he fail to let me see  
His love,—his folly and faithlessness,  
maybe;  
And still in turn I gave him voice to pray  
Such prayers as cling about an empty  
day.

"Thou, keen-eyed, reading me, mayst  
read him through.  
For surely little is there left behind;  
No power great deeds unnameable to do;  
No knowledge for which words he may  
not find,  
No love of things as vague as autumn  
wind—  
—Earth of the earth lies hidden by my  
clay,  
The idle singer of an empty day!

"Children we twain are, saith he, late  
made wise  
In love, but in all else most childish  
still,  
And seeking still the pleasure of our eyes,  
And what our ears with sweetest sounds  
may fill;  
Not fearing Love, lest these things he  
should kill;  
Howe'er his pain by pleasure doth he lay,  
Making a strange tale of an empty day.

"Death have we hated, knowing not  
what it meant;  
Life have we loved, through green leaf  
and through sere,  
Though still the less we knew of its in-  
tent;  
The Earth and Heaven through countless  
year on year.  
Slow changing, were to us but curtains  
fair,  
Hung round about a little room, where  
play  
Weeping and laughter of man's empty  
day.

"O Master, if thine heart could love us  
yet,  
Spite of things left undone, and wrongly  
done,  
Some place in loving hearts then should  
we get,  
For thou, sweet-souled, didst never  
stand alone,  
But knew'st the joy and woe of many an  
one—  
—By lovers dead, who live through thee,  
we pray,  
Help thou us singers of an empty day!"

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou  
mayst gain  
Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof  
thou die?  
Nay, it shall not be.—Thou mayst toil  
in vain,  
And never draw the House of Fame  
anigh;  
Yet he and his shall know whereof we  
cry,  
Shall call it not ill done to strive to lay  
The ghosts that crowd about life's  
empty day.

Then let the others go! and if indeed  
In some old garden thou and I have  
wrought,  
And made fresh flowers spring up from  
hoarded seed,  
And fragrance of old days and deeds  
have brought  
Back to folk weary; all was not for  
nought.  
—No little part it was for me to play—  
The idle singer of an empty day. 1870.

#### THE SEASONS

*Spring.* Spring am I, too soft of heart  
Much to speak ere I depart:  
Ask the Summer-tide to prove  
The abundance of my love.

*Summer.* Summer looked for long am I  
Much shall change or e'er I die  
Prithee take it not amiss  
Though I weary thee with bliss.

*Autumn.* Laden Autumn here I stand  
Worn of heart, and weak of hand:  
Nought but rest seems good to me,  
Speak the word that sets me free.

*Winter.* I am Winter, that do keep  
Longing safe amidst of sleep:  
Who shall say if I were dead  
What should be remembered? 1871.

#### ERROR AND LOSS<sup>1</sup>

UPON an eve I sat me down and wept,  
Because the world to me seemed nowise  
good:  
Still autumn was it, and the meadows  
slept,  
The misty hills dreamed, and the silent  
wood [mood:  
Seemed listening to the sorrow of my

<sup>1</sup> Originally with the title *The Dark Wood*.

I knew not if the earth with me did  
grieve.  
Or if it mock'd my grief that bitter eve.

Then 'twixt my tears a maiden did I see,  
Who drew anigh me on the leaf-strewn  
grass,  
Then stood and gazed upon me pitifully  
With grief-worn eyes, until my woe did  
pass  
From me to her, and tearless now I was,  
And she mid tears was asking me of one  
She long had sought unaided and alone.

I knew not of him, and she turned away  
Into the dark wood, and my own great  
pain  
Still held me there, till dark had slain  
the day,  
And perished at the gray dawn's hand  
again;  
Then from the wood a voice cried: "Ah,  
in vain,  
In vain I seek thee, O thou bitter-sweet!  
In what lone land are set thy longed-for  
feet?"

Then I looked up, and lo, a man there  
came  
From midst the trees, and stood regard-  
ing me  
Until my tears were dried for very  
shame;  
Then he cried out: "O mourner, where  
is she  
Whom I have sought o'er every land and  
sea?  
I love her and she loveth me, and still  
We meet no more than green hill meet-  
eth hill."

With that he passed on sadly, and I knew  
That these had met and missed in the  
dark night,  
Blinded by blindness of the world untrue,  
That hideth love and maketh wrong of  
right.  
Then midst my pity for their lost delight,  
Yet more with barren longing I grew  
weak,  
Yet more I mourned that I had none to  
seek. 1871.

#### THE DAY OF LOVE

(FROM LOVE IS ENOUGH)

DAWN talks to-day  
Over dew-gleaming flowers,

Night flies away  
Till the resting of hours:  
Fresh are thy feet  
And with dreams thine eyes glis-  
tening.

Thy still lips are sweet  
Though the world is a-listening.  
O Love, set a word in my mouth for our  
meeting.  
Cast thine arms round about me to stay  
my heart's beating!  
O fresh day, O fair day, O long day  
made ours!

Morn shall meet noon  
While the flower-stems yet move,  
Though the wind dieth soon  
And the clouds fade above.  
Loved lips are thine  
As I tremble and harken:  
Bright thine eyes shine,  
Though the leaves thy brow darken.  
O Love, kiss me into silence, lest no word  
avail me,  
Stay my head with thy bosom lest breath  
and life fail me!  
O sweet day, O rich day, made long for  
our love!

Late day shall greet eve,  
And the full blossoms shake,  
For the wind will not leave  
The tall trees while they wake.  
Eyes soft with bliss,  
Come nigher and nigher!  
Sweet mouth I kiss,  
Tell me all thy desire!  
Let us speak, love, together some words  
of our story,  
That our lips as they part may remember  
the glory!  
O soft day, O calm day, made clear for  
our sake!

Eve shall kiss night,  
And the leaves stir like rain  
As the wind stealeth light  
O'er the grass of the plain.  
Unseen are thine eyes  
Mid the dreamy night's sleeping.  
And on my mouth there lies  
The dear rain of thy weeping.  
Hold, silence, love, speak not of the  
sweet day departed,  
Cling close to me, love, lest I waken sad  
hearted!  
O kind day, O dear day, short day,  
come again! 1873.

## FINAL CHORUS

(From LOVE IS ENOUGH)

LOVE is enough : ho ye who seek saving,  
Go no further ; come hither ; there  
have been who have found it,  
And these know the House of Fulfilment  
of Craving ;

These know the Cup with the roses  
around it,

These know the World's Wound and  
the balm that hath bound it :  
Cry out, the World heedeth not, " Love,  
lead us home ! "

He leadeth, He harkeneth, He cometh  
to you-ward ;

Set your faces as steel to the fears that  
assemble  
Round his goad for the faint, and his  
scourge for the froward :

Lo his lips, how with tales of last kisses  
they tremble !

Lo his eyes of all sorrow that may not  
dissemble !

Cry out, for he heedeth, " O Love, lead  
us home ! "

O harken the words of his voice of com-  
passion :

" Come cling round about me, ye faith-  
ful who sicken

Of the weary unrest and the world's  
passing fashion !

As the rain in mid-morning your  
troubles shall thicken,

But surely within you some Godhead  
doth quicken,

As ye cry to me heeding, and leading  
you home.

" Come—pain ye shall have, and be blind  
to the ending !

Come—fear ye shall have, mid the  
sky's overcasting !

Come—change ye shall have, for far are  
ye wending !

Come—no crown ye shall have for your  
thirst and your fasting,

But the kissed lips of Love and fair  
life everlasting !

Cry out, for one heedeth, who leadeth  
you home ! "

Is he gone? was he with us?—ho ye  
who seek saving,

Go no further ; come hither ; for have  
we not found it ?

Here is the House of Fulfilment of Crav-  
ing ;

Here is the Cup with the roses around  
it ;

The World's Wound well healed, and  
the balm that hath bound it :  
Cry out! for he heedeth, fair Love that  
led home. 1873.

## THE VOICE OF TOIL

I HEARD men saying, Leave hope and  
praying,

All days shall be as all have been ;  
To-day and to-morrow bring fear and  
sorrow,  
The never ending toil between.

When Earth was younger mid toil and  
hunger,

In hope we strove, and our hands were  
strong :

Then great men led us, with words they  
fed us,

And bade us right the earthly wrong.

Go read in story their deeds and glory,  
Their names amidst the nameless dead ;  
Turn then from lying to us slow-dying  
In that good world to which they led ;

Where fast and faster our iron master,  
The thing we made, for ever drives,  
Bids us grind treasure and fashion pleas-  
ure

For other hopes and other lives.

Where home is a hovel and dull we  
grovel,

Forgetting that the world is fair ;  
Where no babe we cherish, lest its very  
soul perish :

Where mirth is crime, and love a snare.

Who now shall lead us, what god shall  
heed us

As we lie in the hell our hands have won ?  
For us are no rulers but fools and be-  
foolers,

The great are fallen, the wise men gone.

I heard men saying, Leave tears and  
praying,

The sharp knife heedeth not the sheep ;  
Are we not stronger than the rich and  
the wronger,

When day breaks over dreams and sleep ?



Come, shoulder to shoulder, ere the  
world grows older!  
Help lies in nought but thee and me;  
Hope is before us, the long years that  
bore us  
Bore leaders more than men may be.

Let dead hearts tarry and trade and  
marry,  
And trembling nurse their dreams of  
nirth,  
While we the living our lives are giving  
To bring the bright new world to birth.

Come, shoulder to shoulder, ere earth  
grows older!  
The cause spreads over land and sea;  
Now the world shaketh, and fear  
awaketh,  
And joy at last for thee and me.

1884.

## NO MASTER

Saith man to man, We've heard and  
known  
That we no master need  
To live upon this earth our own,  
In fair and manly deed.  
The grief of slaves long passed away  
For us hath forged the chain,  
Till now each worker's patient day  
Builds up the House of Pain.

And we, shall we too, crouch and quail,  
Ashamed, afraid of strife.  
And lest our lives untimely fail  
Embrace the Death in Life?  
Nay, cry aloud, and have no fear,  
We few against the world;  
Awake, arise! the hope we bear  
Against the curse is hurled.

It grows and grows—are we the same,  
The feeble band, the few?  
Or what are these with eyes aflame,  
And hands to deal and do?  
This is the host that bears the word,  
"NO MASTER HIGH OR LOW"—  
A lightning flame, a shearing sword,  
A storm to overthrow.

1884.

## THE DAY IS COMING

Come hither, lads, and harken, for a tale  
there is to tell,  
Of the wonderful days a-coming, when  
all shall be better than well.

And the tale shall be told of a country,  
a land in the midst of the sea,  
And folk shall call it England in the  
days that are going to be.

There more than one in a thousand in  
the days that are yet to come,  
Shall have some hope of the morrow,  
some joy of the ancient home.

For then, laugh not, but listen to this  
strange tale of mine,  
All folk that are in England shall be  
better lodged than swine.

Then a man shall work and bethink him,  
and rejoice in the deeds of his  
hand,  
Nor yet come home in the even too faint  
and weary to stand.

Men in that time a-coming shall work  
and have no fear  
For to-morrow's lack of earning and the  
hunger-wolf anear.

I tell you this for a wonder, that no  
man then shall be glad  
Of his fellow's fall and mishap to snatch  
at the work he had.

For that which the worker winneth shall  
then be his indeed,  
Nor shall half be reaped for nothing by  
him that sowed no seed.

O strange new wonderful justice! But  
for whom shall we gather the grain?  
For ourselves and for each of our fellows,  
and no hand shall labor in vain.

Then all Mine and all Thine shall be Ours,  
and no more shall any man crave  
For riches that serve for nothing but to  
fetter a friend for a slave.

And what wealth then shall be left us  
when none shall gather gold  
To buy his friend in the market, and  
pinch and pine the sold?

Nay, what save the lovely city, and the  
little house on the hill,  
And the wastes and the woodland beauty,  
and the happy fields we till;

And the homes of ancient stories, the  
tombs of the mighty dead;  
And the wise men seeking out marvels,  
and the poet's teeming head;

And the painter's hand of wonder ; and  
the marvelous fiddle-bow,  
And the banded choirs of music : all  
those that do and know.

For all these shall be ours and all men's ;  
nor shall any lack a share  
Of the toil and the gain of living in the  
days when the world grows fair.

Ah ! such are the days that shall be ! But  
what are the deeds of to-day,  
In the days of the years we dwell in,  
that wear our lives away ?

Why, then, and for what are we wait-  
ing ? There are three words to  
speak ;

WE WILL IT, and what is the foeman  
but the dream-strong wakened  
and weak ?

O why and for what are we waiting ?  
while our brothers droop and die,  
And on every wind of the heavens a  
wasted life goes by.

How long shall they reproach us where  
crowd on crowd they dwell,  
Poor ghosts of the wicked city, the gold-  
crushed, hungry hell ?

Through squalid life they labored, in  
sordid grief they died,  
Those sons of a mighty mother, those  
props of England's pride.

They are gone ; there is none can undo  
it, nor save our souls from the  
curse ;  
But many a million cometh, and shall  
they be better or worse ?

It is we must answer and hasten, and  
open wide the door  
For the rich man's hurrying terror, and  
the slow-foot hope of the poor.

Yea, the voiceless wrath of the  
wretched, and their unlearned dis-  
content,  
We must give it voice and wisdom till  
the waiting-tide be spent.

Come, then, since all things call us, the  
living and the dead,  
And o'er the weltering tangle a glim-  
mering light is shed.

Come, then, let us cast off fooling, and  
put by ease and rest,  
For the Cause alone is worthy till the  
good days bring the best.

Come, join in the only battle wherein no  
man can fail,  
Where whoso fadeth and dieth, yet his  
deed shall still prevail.

Ah ! come, cast off all fooling, for this,  
at least, we know :  
That the Dawn and the Day is coming,  
and forth the Banners go. 1885.

### THE DAYS THAT WERE

(MOTTO OF THE HOUSE OF THE WOLFINGS)

WHILES in the early winter eve  
We pass amid the gathering night  
Some homestead that we had to leave  
Years past ; and see its candles bright  
Shine in the room beside the door  
Where we were merry years ago,  
But now must never enter more,  
As still the dark road drives us on.  
E'en so the world of men may turn  
At even of some hurried day  
And see the ancient glimmer burn  
Across the waste that hath no way ;  
Then, with that faint light in its eyes,  
Awhile I bid it linger near  
And nurse in waving memories  
The bitter sweet of days that were.  
1889.

### THE DAY OF DAYS

EACH eve earth falleth down the dark,  
As though its hope were o'er ;  
Yet lurks the sun when day is done  
Behind to-morrow's door.

Gray grows the dawn while men-folk  
sleep,  
Unseen spreads on the light,  
Till the thrush sings to the colored  
things,  
And earth forgets the night.

No otherwise wends on our Hope :  
E'en as a tale that's told  
Are fair lives lost, and all the cost  
Of wise and true and bold.

We've toiled and failed ; we spake the  
word ;  
None harkened ; dumb we lie ;  
Our Hope is dead, the seed we spread  
Fell o'er the earth to die.

What's this? For joy our hearts stand  
still,  
And life is loved and dear,  
The lost and found the Cause hath  
crowned,  
The Day of Days is here. 1890.

#### THE BURGHERS' BATTLE

THICK rise the spear-shafts o'er the land  
That erst the harvest bore ;  
The sword is heavy in the hand,  
*And we return no more.*  
The light wind waves the Ruddy Fox,  
Our banner of the war,  
And ripples in the Running Ox,  
*And we return no more.*  
Across our stubble acres now  
The teams go four and four ;  
But out-worn elders guide the plough,  
*And we return no more.*  
And now the women heavy-eyed  
Turn through the open door  
From gazing down the highway wide,  
*Where we return no more.*  
The shadows of the fruited close  
Dapple the feast-hall floor ;  
There lie our dogs and dream and doze,  
*And we return no more.*  
Down from the minster tower to-day  
Fall the soft chimes of yore  
Amidst the chattering jackdaws' play :  
*And we return no more.*  
But underneath the streets are still ;  
Noon, and the market's o'er !  
Back go the goodwives o'er the hill ;  
*For we return no more.*  
What merchant to our gates shall come ?  
What wise man bring us lore ?  
What abbot ride away to Rome,  
*Now we return no more ?*  
What mayor shall rule the hall we built ?  
Whose scarlet sweep the floor ?  
What judge shall doom the robber's  
guilt,  
*Now we return no more ?*  
New houses in the streets shall rise  
Where builded we before,  
Of other stone wrought otherwise ;  
*For we return no more.*  
And crops shall cover field and hill  
Unlike what once they bore,  
And all be done without our will,  
*Now we return no more.*  
Look up ! the arrows streak the sky,  
The horns of battle roar ;  
The long spears lower and draw nigh,  
*And we return no more.*  
Remember how beside the wain,

We spoke the word of war,  
And sowed this harvest of the plain,  
*And we return no more.*  
Lay spears about the Ruddy Fox !  
The days of old are o'er ;  
Heave sword about the Running Ox !  
*For we return no more.* 1891.

#### AGNES AND THE HILL-MAN

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH

AGNES went through the meadows :  
weeping,  
*Fowl are a-singing.*  
There stood the hill-man heed thereof  
keeping.  
*Agnes, fair Agnes !*  
" Come to the hill, fair Agnes, with me.  
The reddest of gold will I give unto  
thee ! "

Twice went Agnes the hill round about,  
Then wended within, left the fair world  
without.

In the hillside bode Agnes, three years  
thrice told o'er,  
For the green earth sithence fell she  
longing full sore.

There she sat, and lullaby sang in her  
singing,  
And she heard how the bells of England  
were ringing.

Agnes before her true-love did stand :  
" May I wend to the church of the Eng-  
lish Land ? "

" To England's Church well mayst thou  
be gone,  
So that no hand thou lay the red gold  
upon.

" So that when thou art come the church-  
yard anear  
Thou cast not abroad thy golden hair.

" So that when thou standest the church  
within  
To thy mother on bench thou never wit.

" So that when thou hearest the high  
God's name,  
No knee unto earth thou bow to the  
same."

Hand she laid on all gold that was there,  
And cast abroad her golden hair.

And when the church she stood within  
To her mother on bench straight did she  
win.

And when she heard the high God's  
name,  
Knee unto earth she bowed to the same.

When all the mass was sung to its end  
Home with her mother dear did she  
wend.

"Come, Agnes, into the hillside to me.  
For thy seven small sons greet sorely for  
thee!"

"Let them greet, let them greet, as  
they will have to do;  
For never again will I hearken thereto!"

Weird laid he on her, sore sickness he  
wrought,  
*Fowl are a-singing.*  
That self-same hour to death was she  
brought.  
*Agnes, fair Agnes.* 1891.

#### ICELAND FIRST SEEN

Lo from our loitering ship a new land at  
last to be seen;  
Toothed rocks down the side of the firch  
on the east guard a weary wide lea,  
And black slope the hill-sides above,  
striped adown with their desolate  
green:  
And a peak rises up on the west from  
the meeting of cloud and of sea,  
Foursquare from base unto point like  
the building of Gods that have been,  
The last of that waste of the mountains  
all cloud-wreathed and snow-flecked  
and gray,  
And bright with the dawn that began  
just now at the ending of day.

Ah! what came we forth for to see that  
our hearts are so hot with desire?  
Is it enough for our rest the sight of this  
desolate strand,  
And the mountain-waste voiceless as  
death but for winds that may sleep not  
nor tire?

Why do we long to wend forth through  
the length and breadth of a land,  
Dreadful with grinding of ice, and  
record of scarce hidden fire,

But that there 'mid the gray grassy dales  
sore scarred by the ruining streams  
Lives the tale of the Northland of old  
and the undying glory of dreams?

O land, as some cave by the sea where  
the treasures of old have been laid,  
The sword it may be of a king whose  
name was the turning of fight;  
Or the staff of some wise of the world  
that many things made and unmade.  
Or the ring of a woman maybe whose  
woe is grown wealth and delight.  
No wheat and no wine grows above it,  
no orchard for blossom and shade;  
The few ships that sail by its blackness  
but deem it the mouth of a grave;  
Yet sure when the world shall awaken,  
this too shall be mighty to save.

Or rather, O land, if a marvel it seemeth  
that men ever sought  
Thy wastes for a field and a garden ful-  
filled of all wonder and doubt,  
And feasted amidst of the winter when  
the fight of the year had been fought,  
Whose plunder all gathered together  
was little to babble about:  
Cry aloud from thy wastes, O thou  
land, "Not for this nor for that was I  
wrought  
Amid waning of realms and of riches  
and death of things worshipped and  
sure,  
I abide here the spouse of a God, and I  
made and I make and endure."

O Queen of the grief without know-  
ledge, of the courage that may not  
avail,  
Of the longing that may not attain, of  
the love that shall never forget,  
More joy than the gladness of laughter  
thy voice hath amidst of its wail:  
More hope than of pleasure fulfilled  
amidst of thy blindness is set;  
More glorious than gaining of all, thine  
unfaltering hand that shall fail:  
For what is the mark on thy brow but  
the brand that thy Brynhild doth  
bear?  
Lone once, and loved and undone by a  
love that no ages outwear.

Ah! when thy Balder comes back, and  
bears from the heart of the Sun,  
Peace and the healing of pain, and the  
wisdom that waiteth no more;  
And the lilies are laid on thy brow

'mid the crown of the deeds thou  
hast done;  
And the roses spring up by thy feet that  
the rocks of the wilderness wore.  
Ah! when thy Balder comes back and  
we gather the gains he hath won,  
Shall we not linger a little to talk of thy  
sweetness of old,  
Yea, turn back awhile to thy travail  
whence the gods stood aloof to be-  
hold? 1891.

#### TO THE MUSE OF THE NORTH

O MUSE that swayest the sad Northern  
Song,  
Thy right hand full of smiting and of  
wrong,  
Thy left hand holding pity; and thy  
breast  
Heaving with hope of that so certain  
rest:  
Thou, with the gray eyes kind and un-  
afraid,  
The soft lips trembling not, though they  
have said  
The doom of the World and those that  
dwell therein.  
The lips that smile not though thy  
children win  
The fated Love that draws the fated  
Death.  
O, borne adown the fresh stream of thy  
breath,  
Let some word reach my ears and touch  
my heart,  
That, if it may be, I may have a part

In that great sorrow of thy children  
dead  
That vexed the brow, and bowed adown  
the head,  
Whitened the hair, made life a won-  
drous dream,  
And death the murmur of a restful  
stream,  
But left no stain upon those souls of  
thine  
Whose greatness through the tangled  
world doth shine.  
O Mother, and Love and Sister all in  
one,  
Come thou; for sure I am enough alone  
That thou thine arms about my heart  
shouldst throw,  
And wrap me in the grief of long ago.  
1891.

#### DRAWING NEAR THE LIGHT

Lo, when we wade the tangled wood,  
In haste and hurry to be there,  
Nought seem its leaves and blossoms  
good,  
For all that they be fashioned fair.  
But looking up, at last we see  
The glimmer of the open light,  
From o'er the place where we would be;  
Then grow the very brambles bright.  
So now, amidst our day of strife,  
With many a matter glad we play,  
When once we see the light of life  
Gleam through the tangle of to-day.  
1891.

# SWINBURNE

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## SWINBURNE

### A SONG IN TIME OF ORDER

1852

PUSH hard across the sand,  
For the salt wind gathers breath;  
Shoulder and wrist and hand,  
Push hard as the push of death.

The wind is as iron that rings,  
The foam-heads loosen and flee;  
It swells and welters and swings,  
The pulse of the tide of the sea.

And up on the yellow cliff  
The long corn flickers and shakes;  
Push, for the wind holds stiff,  
And the gunwale dips and rakes.

Good hap to the fresh fierce weather,  
The quiver and beat of the sea!  
While three men hold together  
The kingdoms are less by three.

Out to the sea with her there,  
Out with her over the sand,  
Let the kings keep the earth for their  
share!  
We have done with the sharers of  
land.

They have tied the world in a tether,  
They have bought over God with a  
fee;  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

We have done with the kisses that sting,  
The thief's mouth red from the feast,  
The blood on the hands of the king,  
And the lie at the lips of the priest.

Will they tie the winds in a tether,  
Put a bit in the jaws of the sea?  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

Let our flag run out straight in the wind!  
The old red shall be floated again

When the ranks that are thin shall be  
thinned,  
When the names that were twenty  
are ten;

When the devil's riddle is mastered  
And the galley-bench creaks with a  
Pope,  
We shall see Buonaparte the bastard  
Kick heels with his throat in a rope.

While the shepherd sets wolves on his  
sheep  
And the emperor halters his Kine,  
While Shame is a watchman asleep  
And Faith is a keeper of swine.

Let the wind shake our flag like a  
feather,  
Like the plumes of the foam of the  
sea!

While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

All the world has its burdens to bear,  
From Cayenne to the Austrian  
whips;  
Forth, with the rain in our hair  
And the salt sweet foam in our lips:

In the teeth of the hard glad weather,  
In the blown wet face of the sea;  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

1862.

### CHORUSES FROM ATALANTA IN CALYDON

#### THE YOUTH OF THE YEAR

WHEN the hounds of spring are on  
winter's traces,  
The mother of months in meadow or  
plain  
Fills the shadows and windy places  
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale amor-  
ous  
Is half assuaged for Itylus,  
For the Thracian ships and the foreign  
faces,  
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying  
of quivers,  
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,  
With a noise of winds and many rivers,  
With a clamor of waters, and with  
might;  
Bind on thy sandals. O thou most fleet,  
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;  
For the faint east quickens, the wan  
west shivers,  
Round the feet of the day and the feet  
of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we  
sing to her,  
Fold our hands round her knees, and  
cling?

O that man's heart were as fire and could  
spring to her,  
Fire, or the strength of the streams  
that spring!  
For the stars and the winds are unto her  
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;  
For the risen stars and the fallen cling  
to her,  
And the southwest-wind and the west-  
wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,  
And all the season of snows and sins;  
The days dividing lover and lover,  
The light that loses, the night that  
wins;  
And time remembered is grief forgotten,  
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,  
And in green underwood and cover  
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,  
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,  
The faint fresh flame of the young year  
flushes  
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;  
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,  
And the oat is heard above the lyre,  
And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes  
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut  
root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,  
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,  
Follows with dancing and fills with de-  
light

The Mænad and the Bassarid;  
And soft as lips that laugh and hide  
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,  
And screen from seeing and leave in  
sight  
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair  
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;  
The wild vine slipping down leaves  
bare  
Her bright breast shortening into  
sighs;  
The wild vine slips with the weight of  
its leaves,  
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves  
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that  
scare  
The wolf that follows, the fawn that  
flies.

#### THE LIFE OF MAN

Before the beginning of years,  
There came to the making of man  
Time, with a gift of tears;  
Grief, with a glass that ran;  
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;  
Summer, with flowers that fell;  
Remembrance fallen from heaven,  
And madness risen from hell;  
Strength without hands to smite;  
Love that endures for a breath;  
Night, the shadow of light,  
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand  
Fire, and the falling of tears,  
And a measure of sliding sand  
From under the feet of the years;  
And froth and drift of the sea;  
And dust of the laboring earth;  
And bodies of things to be  
In the houses of death and of birth;  
And wrought with weeping and laughter  
And fashioned with loathing and love,  
With life before and after  
And death beneath and above,  
For a day and a night and a morrow,  
That his strength might endure for a  
span  
With travail and heavy sorrow,  
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the  
south  
They gathered as unto strife;  
They breathed upon his mouth,  
They filled his body with life;



Eyesight and speech they wrought  
 For the veils of the soul therein,  
 A time for labor and thought,  
 A time to serve and to sin;  
 They gave him light in his ways,  
 And love, and a space for delight,  
 And beauty and length of days,  
 And night, and sleep in the night.  
 His speech is a burning fire;  
 With his lips he travaileth;  
 In his heart is a blind desire;  
 In his eyes foreknowledge of death;  
 He weaves, and is clothed with derision;  
 Sows, and he shall not reap;  
 His life is a watch or a vision  
 Between a sleep and a sleep.

#### LOVE AND LOVE'S MATES

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art  
 fair; thou art goodly, O Love;  
 Thy wings make light in the air as the  
 wings of a dove.  
 Thy feet are as winds that divide the  
 stream of the sea;  
 Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the  
 garment of thee.  
 Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a  
 flame of fire;  
 Before thee the laughter, behind thee the  
 tears of desire;  
 And twain go forth beside thee, a man  
 with a maid;  
 Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom  
 delight makes afraid;  
 As the breath in the buds that stir is her  
 bridal breath:  
 But Fate is the name of her; and his  
 name is Death.

#### NATURE

O that I now, I too were  
 By deep wells and water-floods,  
 Streams of ancient hills, and where  
 All the wan green places bear  
 Blossoms cleaving to the sod,  
 Fruitless fruit, and grasses fair,  
 Or such darkest ivy-buds  
 As divide thy yellow hair,  
 Bacchus, and their leaves that nod  
 Round thy fawn-skin brush the bare  
 Snow-soft shoulders of a god;  
 There the year is sweet, and there  
 Earth is full of secret springs,  
 And the fervent rose-cheeked hours,  
 Those that marry dawn and noon,  
 There are sunless, there look pale  
 In dim leaves and hidden air,

Pale as grass or latter flowers,  
 Or the wild vine's wan wet rings  
 Full of dew beneath the moon,  
 And all day the nightingale  
 Sleeps, and all night sings;  
 There in cold remote recesses  
 That nor alien eyes assail,  
 Feet, nor imminence of wings,  
 Nor a wind nor any tune,  
 Thou, O queen and holiest,  
 Flower the whitest of all things,  
 With reluctant lengthening tresses  
 And with sudden splendid breast  
 Save of maidens un beholden,  
 There art wont to enter, there  
 Thy divine swift limbs and golden  
 Maiden growth of unbound hair,  
 Bathed in waters white,  
 Shine, and many a maid's by thee  
 In moist woodland or the hilly  
 Flowerless brakes where wells abound  
 Out of all men's sight;  
 Or in lower pools that see  
 All their margins clothed all round  
 With the innumerable lily,  
 Whence the golden-girdled bee  
 Flits through flowering rush to fret  
 White or dusky violet,  
 Fair as those that in far years  
 With their buds left luminous  
 And their little leaves made wet  
 From the warmer dew of tears,  
 Mother's tears in extreme need,  
 Hid the limbs of Iamus,  
 Of thy brother's seed;  
 For his heart was piteous  
 Toward him, even as thine heart now  
 Pitiful toward us;  
 Thine, O goddess, turning hither  
 A benignant blameless brow;  
 Seeing enough of evil done  
 And lives withered as leaves wither  
 In the blasting of the sun;  
 Seeing enough of hunters dead,  
 Ruin enough of all our year,  
 Herds and harvest slain and shed,  
 Herdsmen stricken many an one,  
 Fruits and flocks consumed together,  
 And great length of deadly days.  
 Yet with reverent lips and fear  
 Turn we toward thee, turn and praise  
 For this lightening of clear weather  
 And prosperities begun.  
 For not seldom, when all air  
 As bright water without breath  
 Shines, and when men fear not, fate  
 Without thunder unaware  
 Breaks, and brings down death.  
 Joy with grief ye great gods give,

Good with bad, and overbear  
 All the pride of us that live,  
 All the high estate,  
 As ye long since overbore,  
 As in old time long before,  
 Many a strong man and a great,  
 All that were.  
 But do thou, sweet, otherwise,  
 Having heed of all our prayer,  
 Taking note of all our sighs ;  
 We beseech thee by thy light.  
 By thy bow, and thy sweet eyes,  
 And the kingdom of the night,  
 Be thou favorable and fair ;  
 By thine arrows and thy might  
 And Orion overthrown ;  
 By the maiden thy delight,  
 By the indissoluble zone  
 And the sacred hair.

## FATE

Not as with sundering of the earth  
 Nor as with cleaving of the sea  
 Nor fierce foreshadowings of a birth  
 Nor flying dreams of death to be,  
 Nor loosening of a large world's girth  
 And quickening of the body of night,  
 And sound of thunder in men's ears  
 And fire of lightning in men's sight,  
 Fate, mother of desires and fears,  
 Bore unto men the law of tears ;  
 But sudden, an unfathered flame,  
 And broken out of night, she shone,  
 She, without body, without name,  
 In days forgotten and foregone ;  
 And heaven rang round her as she came  
 Like smitten cymbals, and lay bare ;  
 Clouds and great stars, thunders and  
   snows,  
 The blue sad fields and folds of air,  
 The life that breathes, the life that  
   grows,  
 All wind, all fire, that burns or blows,  
 Even all these knew her : for she is great ;  
 The daughter of doom, the mother of  
   death,  
 The sister of sorrow ; a lifelong weight  
 That no man's finger lighteneth,  
 Nor any god can lighten fate ;  
 A landmark seen across the way  
 Where one race treads as the other  
   trod ;  
 An evil sceptre, an evil stay,  
 Wrought for a staff, wrought for a rod,  
 The bitter jealousy of God.

For death is deep as the sea,  
 And fate as the waves thereof.

Shall the waves take pity on thee  
 Or the south-wind offer thee love ?  
 Wilt thou take the night for thy day  
 Or the darkness for light on thy way  
 Till thou say in thine heart, Enough ?

Behold, thou art over fair, thou art  
 over wise ;  
 The sweetness of spring in thine hair,  
 and the light in thine eyes.  
 The light of the spring in thine eyes,  
 and the sound in thine ears ;  
 Yet thine heart shall wax heavy with  
 sighs and thine eyelids with tears.  
 Wilt thou cover thine hair with gold ;  
 and with silver thy feet ?  
 Hast thou taken the purple to fold thee,  
 and made thy mouth sweet ?  
 Behold, when thy face is made bare, he  
 that loved thee shall hate ;  
 Thy face shall be no more fair at the  
 fall of thy fate.  
 For thy life shall fall as a leaf and be  
 shed as the rain ;  
 And the veil of thine head shall be grief ;  
 and the crown shall be pain.

## THE DEATH OF MELEAGER

*Meleager.* Let your hands meet  
 Round the weight of my head,  
 Lift ye my feet  
 As the feet of the dead ;  
 For the flesh of my body is molten, the  
 limbs of it molten as lead.

*Chorus.* O thy luminous face,  
 Thine imperious eyes !  
 O the grief, O the grace,  
 As of day when it dies !  
 Who is this bending over thee, lord, with  
 tears and suppression of sighs !

*Meleager.* Is a bride so fair ?  
 Is a maid so meek ?  
 With unchapleted hair,  
 With unfiled cheek.  
*Atalanta,* the pure among women, whose  
 name is as blessing to speak.

*Atalanta.* I would that with feet,  
 Unsaddled, unshod,  
 Overbold, overfleet,  
 I had swum not nor trod  
 From Arcadia to Calydon, northward, a  
 blast of the envy of God.

*Meleager.* Unto each man his fate ;  
 Unto each as he saith

In whose fingers the weight  
Of the world is as breath;  
Yet I would that in clamor of battle  
mine hands had laid hold upon  
death.

*Chorus.* Not with cleaving of shields  
And their clash in thine ear,  
When the lord of fought fields  
Breaketh spearshaft from spear,  
Thou art broken, our lord, thou art  
broken, with travail and labor  
and fear.

*Meleager.* Would God he had found me  
Beneath fresh boughs!  
Would God he had bound me  
Unawares in mine house,  
With light in mine eyes and songs in my  
-lips, and a crown on my brows!

*Chorus.* Whence art thou sent from us?  
Whither thy goal?  
How art thou rent from us,  
Thou that wert whole,  
As with severing of eyelids and eyes, as  
with sundering of body and soul!

*Meleager.* My heart is within me  
As an ash in the fire;  
Whosoever hath seen me,  
Without lute, without lyre,  
Shall sing of me grievous things, even  
things that were ill to desire.

*Chorus.* Who shall raise thee  
From the house of the dead?  
Or what man praise thee  
That thy praise may be said?  
Alas thy beauty! alas thy body! alas  
thine head!

*Meleager.* But thou, O mother,  
That dreamer of dreams,  
Wilt thou bring forth another  
To feel the sun's beams  
When I move among shadows a shadow,  
and wail by impassable streams?

*Æneus.* What thing wilt thou leave me  
Now this thing is done?  
A man wilt thou give me,  
A son for my son,  
For the light of mine eyes, the desire of  
my life, the desirable one?

*Chorus.* Thou wert glad above others,  
Yea, fair beyond word;  
Thou wert glad among mothers;

For each man that heard  
Of thee, praise there was added unto thee,  
as wings to the feet of a bird.

*Æneus.* Who shall give back  
Thy face of old years,  
With travail made black,  
Grown gray among fears,  
Mother of sorrow, mother of cursing,  
mother of tears?

*Meleager.* Though thou art as fire  
Fed with fuel in vain,  
My delight, my desire,  
Is more chaste than the rain,  
More pure than the dewfall, more holy  
than stars are that live without  
stain.

*Atalanta.* I would that as water  
My life's blood had thawn,  
Or as winter's wan daughter  
Leaves lowland and lawn  
Spring-stricken, or ever mine eyes had  
beheld thee made dark in thy  
dawn.

*Chorus.* When thou dravest the men  
Of the chosen of Thrace,  
None turned him again  
Nor endured he thy face  
Clothed round with the blush of the  
battle, with light from a terrible  
place.

*Æneus.* Thou shouldst die as he dies  
For whom none sheddeth tears;  
Filling thine eyes  
And fulfilling thine ears,  
With the brilliance of battle, the bloom  
and the beauty, the splendor of  
spears.

*Chorus.* In the ears of the world  
It is sung, it is told,  
And the light thereof hurled  
And the noise thereof rolled  
From the Acroceraunian snow to the  
ford of the fleece of gold.

*Meleager.* Would God ye could carry me  
Forth of all these;  
Heap sand and bury me  
By the Chersonese,  
Where the thundering Bosphorus an-  
swers the thunder of Pontic seas.

*Æneus.* Dost thou mock at our praise  
And the singing begun

And the men of strange days  
Praising my son  
In the folds of the hills of home, high  
places of Calydon?

*Meleager.* For the dead man no home is;  
Ah, better to be  
What the flower of the foam is  
In fields of the sea,  
That the sea-waves might be as my rai-  
ment, the gulf-stream a garment  
for me.

*Chorus.* Who shall seek thee and bring  
And restore thee thy day,  
When the dove dipped her wing,  
And the oars won their way  
Where the narrowing Symplegades  
whitened the straits of Propontis  
with spray?

*Meleager.* Will ye crown me my tomb  
Or exalt me my name,  
Now my spirits consume,  
Now my flesh is a flame?  
Let the sea slake it once, and men speak  
of me sleeping to praise me or  
shame.

*Chorus.* Turn back now, turn thee,  
As who turns him to wake;  
Though the life in thee burn thee,  
Couldst thou bathe it and slake  
Where the sea-ridge of Helle hangs  
heavier, and cast upon west waters  
break?

*Meleager.* Would the winds blow me  
back  
Or the waves hurl me home?  
Ah, to touch in the track  
Where the pine learnt to roam  
Cold girdles and crowns of the sea-gods,  
cool blossoms of water and foam!

*Chorus.* The gods may release  
That they made fast;  
Thy soul shall have ease  
In thy limbs at the last;  
But what shall they give thee for life,  
sweet life that is overpast?

*Meleager.* Not the life of men's veins,  
Not of flesh that conceives;  
But the grace that remains,  
The fair beauty that cleaves  
To the life of the rains in the grasses, the  
life of the dew on the leaves.

*Chorus.* Thou wert helmsman and chief;  
Wilt thou turn in an hour,  
Thy limbs to the leaf,  
Thy face to the flower,  
Thy blood to the water, thy soul to the  
gods who divide and devour?

*Meleager.* The years are hungry,  
They wail all their days;  
The gods wax angry  
And weary of praise;  
And who shall bridle their lips? and  
who shall straighten their ways?

*Chorus.* The gods guard over us  
With sword and with rod;  
Weaving shadow to cover us,  
Heaping the soil,  
That law may fulfil herself wholly, to  
darken man's face before God.

#### FINAL CHORUS

Who shall contend with his lords  
Or cross them or do them wrong?  
Who shall bind them as with cords?  
Who shall tame them as with song?  
Who shall smite them as with swords?  
For the hands of their kingdom are  
strong. 1865.

#### SONGS FROM CHASTELARD

##### MARY BEATON'S SONG<sup>1</sup>

Le navire  
Est à l'eau ;  
Entends rire  
Ce gros flot  
Que fait luire  
Et bruire  
Le vieux sire  
Aquila.

Dans l'espace  
Du grand air  
Le vent passe  
Comme un fer ;  
Siffle et sonne,  
Tombe et tonne ;  
Prend et donne  
À la mer.

<sup>1</sup> Probably no excuse is needed for including here some examples of Swinburne's French verse, both for its own light and exquisite beauty, and because it so characteristically represents him. One of his chief distinctions is that of being perhaps the only Englishman who ever really understood and appreciated French poetry.

Vois, la brise  
Tourne au nord,  
Et la bise  
Souffle et mord  
Sur ta pure  
Chevelure  
Qui murmure  
Et se tord.

Le navire  
Passe et luit,  
Puis chavire  
À grand bruit ;  
Et sur l'onde  
La plus blonde  
Tête au monde  
Flotte et fuit.

Moi, je rame,  
Et l'amour,  
C'est ma flamme,  
Mon grand jour,  
Ma chandelle  
Blanche et belle,  
Ma chapelle  
De séjour.

Toi, mon âme  
Et ma foi,  
Sois ma dame  
Et ma loi ;  
Sois ma mie,  
Sois Marie,  
Sois ma vie,  
Toute à moi !

#### LOVE AT EBB

Between the sunset and the sea  
My love laid hands and lips on me ;  
Of sweet came sour, of day came night,  
Of long desire came brief delight :  
Ah love, and what thing came of thee  
Between the sea-downs and the sea ?

Between the sea-mark and the sea  
Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me ;  
Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,  
And dead delight to new desire :  
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to  
be

Between the sea-sand and the sea.

Between the sundown and the sea  
Love watched one hour of love with me ;  
Then down the all-golden water-ways  
His feet flew after yesterday's ;  
I saw them come and saw them flee  
Between the sea-foam and the sea.

Between the sea-strand and the sea  
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me ;  
The first star saw twain turn to one  
Between the moonrise and the sun ;  
The next, that saw not love, saw me  
Between the sea-banks and the sea.

#### THE QUEEN'S SONG

J'ai vu faner bien des choses,  
Mainte feuille aller au vent.  
En songeant aux vieilles roses,  
J'ai pleuré souvent.

Vois-tu dans les roses mortes  
Amour qui sourit caché ?  
O mon amant, à nos portes  
L'as-tu vu couché ?

As-tu vu jamais au monde  
Vénus chasser et courir ?  
Fille de l'onde, avec l'onde  
Doit-elle mourir ?

Aux jours de neige et de givre  
L'amour s'effeuille et s'endort ;  
Avec mai doit-il revivre,  
Ou bien est-il mort ?

Qui sait où s'en vont les roses ?  
Qui sait où s'en va le vent ?  
En songeant à telles choses,  
J'ai pleuré souvent.

1865.

#### HYMN TO PROSERPINE

(AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF  
THE CHRISTIAN FAITH)

*Vicisti, Galilæe*

I HAVE lived long enough, having seen  
one thing, that love hath an end :  
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near  
me now and befriend.

Thou art more than the day or the mor-  
row, the seasons that laugh or that  
weep ;

For these give joy and sorrow ; but thou,  
Proserpina, sleep.

Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet  
the feet of the dove ;

But a goodlier gift is thine than foam  
of the grapes or love.

Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and  
harpstring of gold,

A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God  
to behold ?

I am sick of singing ; the bays burn deep  
and chafe : I am fain

To rest a little from praise and grievous  
pleasure and pain.  
For the Gods we know not of, who give  
us our daily breath,  
We know they are cruel as love or life,  
and lovely as death.  
O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast  
forth, wiped out in a day!  
From your wrath is the world released,  
redeemed from your chains, men  
say.  
New Gods are crowned in the city, their  
flowers have broken your rods;  
They are merciful, clothed with pity,  
the young compassionate Gods.  
But for me their new device is barren,  
the days are bare;  
Things long past over suffice, and men  
forgotten that were.  
Time and the Gods are at strife: ye  
dwell in the midst thereof,  
Draining a little life from the barren  
breasts of love.  
I say to you, cease, take rest; yea, I say  
to you all, be at peace,  
Till the bitter milk of her breast and the  
barren bosom shall cease.  
Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? but  
these thou shalt not take.  
The laurel, the palms and the pæan,  
the breast of the nymphs in the  
brake;  
Breasts more soft than a dove's, that  
tremble with tenderer breath;  
And all the wings of the Loves, and all  
the joy before death;  
All the feet of the hours that sound as  
a single lyre,  
Dropped and deep in the flowers, with  
strings that flicker like fire.  
More than these wilt thou give, things  
fairer than all these things?  
Nay, for a little we live, and life hath  
mutable wings.  
A little while and we die; shall life not  
thrive as it may?  
For no man under the sky lives twice,  
outliving his day.  
And grief is a grievous thing, and a man  
bath enough of his tears;  
Why should he labor, and bring fresh  
grief to blacken his years?  
Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean;  
the world has grown gray from  
thy breath:  
We have drunken of things Lethean,  
and fed on the fulness of death.  
Laurel is green for a season, and love is  
sweet for a day;

But love grows bitter with treason, and  
laurel outlives not May.  
Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the  
world is not sweet in the end;  
For the old faiths loosen and fall, the  
new years ruin and rend.  
Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul  
is a rock that abides;  
But her ears are vexed with the roar and  
her face with the foam of the tides.  
O lips that the live blood faints in, the  
leavings of racks and rods!  
O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of  
gibbeted Gods!  
Though all men abase them before you  
in spirit, and all knees bend,  
I kneel not, neither adore you, but  
standing, look to the end.  
All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits  
and sorrows are cast  
Far out with the foam of the present that  
sweeps to the surf of the past:  
Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and  
between the remote sea-gates,  
Waste water washes, and tall ships  
founder, and deep death waits:  
Where, mighty with deepening sides,  
clad about with the seas as with  
wings,  
And impelled of invisible tides, and ful-  
filled of unspeakable things,  
White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-  
toothed and serpentine-curved,  
Rolls, under the whitening wind of the  
future, the wave of the world.  
The depths stand naked in sunder behind  
it, the storms flee away;  
In the hollow before it the thunder is  
taken and snared as a prey;  
In its sides is the north-wind bound; and  
its salt is of all men's tears;  
With light of ruin, and sound of changes,  
and pulse of years:  
With travail of day after day, and with  
trouble of hour upon hour;  
And bitter as blood is the spray; and the  
crests are as fangs that devour:  
And its vapor and storm of its steam as  
the sighing of spirits to be;  
And its noise as the noise in a dream:  
and its depth as the roots of the sea:  
And the height of its heads as the height  
of the utmost stars of the air:  
And the ends of the earth at the might  
thereof tremble, and time is made  
bare.  
Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins,  
will ye chasten the high sea with  
rods?

Will ye take her to chain her with chains,  
 who is older than all ye Gods?  
 All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire  
 shall ye pass and be past;  
 Ye are Gods, and behold ye shall die, and  
 the waves be upon you at last.  
 In the darkness of time, in the deeps of  
 the years, in the changes of things,  
 Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and  
 the world shall forget you for  
 kings.  
 Though the feet of thine high priests  
 tread where thy lords and our  
 forefathers trod,  
 Though these that were Gods are dead,  
 and thou being dead art a God,  
 Though before thee the throned Cytherean  
 be fallen, and hidden her  
 head,  
 Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy  
 dead shall go down to thee dead.  
 Of the maiden thy mother, men sing as a  
 goddess with grace clad around;  
 Thou art throned where another was  
 king; where another was queen  
 she is crowned.  
 Yea, once we had sight of another: but  
 now she is queen, say these.  
 Not as thine, not as thine was our mother,  
 a blossom of flowering seas,  
 Clothed round with the world's desire as  
 with raiment, and fair as the foam,  
 And fleetier than kindled fire, and a goddess  
 and mother of Rome.  
 For thine came pale and a maiden, and  
 sister to sorrow; but ours,  
 Her deep hair heavily laden with odor  
 and color of flowers,  
 White rose of the rose-white water, a  
 silver splendor, a flame,  
 Bent down unto us that besought her,  
 and earth grew sweet with her  
 name.  
 For thine came weeping, a slave among  
 slaves, and rejected; but she  
 Came flushed from the full-flushed wave,  
 and imperial, her foot on the sea.  
 And the wonderful waters knew her, the  
 winds and the viewless ways,  
 And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the  
 sea-blue stream of the bays.  
 Ye are fallen, our lords by what token?  
 we wist that ye should not fall.  
 Ye were all so fair that are broken; and  
 one more fair than ye all.  
 But I turn to her still, having seen she  
 shall surely abide in the end;  
 Goddess and maiden and queen, be near  
 me now and befriend.

O daughter of earth, of my mother, her  
 crown and blossom of birth,  
 I am also, I also, thy brother; I go as I  
 came unto earth.  
 In the night where thine eyes are as  
 moons are in heaven, the night  
 where thou art,  
 Where the silence is more than all tunes,  
 where sleep overflows from the  
 heart,  
 Where the poppies are sweet as the rose  
 in our world, and the red rose is  
 white,  
 And the wind falls faint as it blows with  
 the fume of the flowers of the  
 night,  
 And the murmur of spirits that sleep in  
 the shadow of Gods from afar  
 Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the  
 deep dim soul of a star,  
 In the sweet low light of thy face, under  
 heavens untrod by the sun,  
 Let my soul with their souls find place,  
 and forget what is done and un-  
 done.  
 Thou art more than the Gods who  
 number the days of our temporal  
 breath;  
 For these give labor and slumber; but  
 thou, Proserpina, death.  
 Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a  
 season in silence. I know  
 I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep  
 as they sleep; even so.  
 For the glass of the year is brittle  
 wherein we gaze for a span;  
 A little soul for a little bears up this  
 corpse which is man.<sup>1</sup>  
 So long I endure, no longer; and laugh  
 not again, neither weep.  
 For there is no God found stronger than  
 death; and death is a sleep. 1866.

## A MATCH

If love were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf,  
 Our lives would grow together  
 In sad or singing weather,  
 Blown fields or flowerful closes,  
 Green pleasure or gray grief;  
 If love were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,  
 And love were like the tune,  
 With double sound and single  
 Delight our lips would mingle.

<sup>1</sup> ψυχρίον ἐλ βασιλέων νεκρὸν. ΕΠΙΚΤΕΤΟΣ

With kisses glad as birds are  
That get sweet rain at noon ;  
If I were what the words are  
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,  
And I your love were death,  
We'd shine and snow together  
Ere March made sweet the weather  
With daffodil and starling  
And hours of fruitful breath ;  
If you were life, my darling,  
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,  
And I were page to joy,  
We'd play for lives and seasons  
With loving looks and treasons  
And tears of night and morrow  
And laughs of maid and boy ;  
If you were thrall to sorrow,  
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,  
And I were lord in May,  
We'd throw with leaves for hours  
And draw for days with flowers,  
Till day like night were shady  
And night were bright like day ;  
If you were April's lady,  
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,  
And I were king of pain,  
We'd hunt down love together,  
Pluck out his flying-feather,  
And teach his feet a measure,  
And find his mouth a rein ;  
If you were queen of pleasure,  
And I were king of pain. 1886.

#### A BALLAD OF BURDENS

THE burden of fair women. Vain delight,  
And love self-slain in some sweet  
shameful way,  
And sorrowful old age that comes by  
night  
As a thief comes that has no heart by  
day,  
And change that finds fair cheeks and  
leaves them gray,  
And weariness that keeps awake for hire,  
And grief that says what pleasure used  
to say ;  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is  
sore,

A burden without fruit in child-  
bearing ;  
Between the nightfall and the dawn  
threescore,  
Threescore between the dawn and  
evening.  
The shuddering in thy lips, the shud-  
dering  
In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,  
Makes love seem shameful and a  
wretched thing.  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay,  
kneel down,  
Cover thy head, and weep ; for verily  
These market-men that buy thy white  
and brown  
In the last days shall take no thought  
for thee.  
In the last days like earth thy face  
shall be,  
Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with  
brine and mire,  
Sad with sick leavings of the sterile  
sea.  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt  
fear  
Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy  
bed ;  
And say at night, " Would God the day  
were here,"  
And say at dawn " Would God the day  
were dead."  
With weary days thou shalt be clothed  
and fed,  
And wear remorse of heart for thine  
attire.  
Pain for thy girdle and sorrow upon  
thine head ;  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt  
see  
Gold tarnished, and the gray above the  
green ;  
And as the thing thou seest thy face  
shall be,  
And no more as the thing beforetime  
seen.  
And thou shalt say of mercy " It hath  
been,"  
And living, watch the old lips and loves  
expire,  
And talking, tears shall take thy  
breath between.  
This is the end of every man's desire.



The burden of sad sayings. In that day  
Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours,  
and tell  
Thy times and ways and words of love,  
and say

How one was dear and one desirable,  
And sweet was life to hear and sweet  
to smell,

But now with lights reverse the old hours  
retire

And the last hour is shod with fire from  
hell.

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in  
spring,

White rain and wind among the tender  
trees ;

A summer of green sorrows gathering,  
Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,

With sad face set towards the year,  
that sees

The charred ash drop out of the dropping  
pyre,

And winter wan with many maladies ;

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight  
And out of love, beyond the reach of  
hands,

Changed in the changing of the dark and  
light,

They walk and weep about the barren  
lands

Where no seed is nor any garner stands,  
Where in short breaths the doubtful days

respire,

And time's turned glass lets through  
the sighing sands ;

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and  
lust [light ;

Forsake thee, and the face of thy de-

And underfoot the heavy hour strews  
dust ;

And overhead strange weathers burn  
and bite ;

And where the red was, lo, the blood-  
less white,

And where truth was, the likeness of a  
liar,

And where day was, the likeness of  
the night ;

This is the end of every man's desire.

#### ENVOI

Princes, and ye whom pleasure quick-  
eneth,

Heed well this rhyme before your  
pleasure tire ;

For life is sweet, but after life is death.

This is the end of every man's desire.

1800.

#### RONDEL

KISSING her hair I sat against her feet,  
Wove and unwove it, wound and found  
it sweet

Made fast therewith her hands, drew  
down her eyes,

Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like  
dim skies ;

With her own tresses bound and found  
her fair,

Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to  
me,

Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold  
sea ;

What pain could get between my face  
and hers ?

What new sweet thing would love not  
relish worse ?

Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed  
me there,

Kissing her hair ?

1866.

#### IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

BACK to the flower-town, side by side,  
The bright months bring,

New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,  
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,  
Filled full of sun ;

All things come back to her, being  
free,—

All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot

Flowers that were dead

Live, and old suns revive ; but not

That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea.

Far north, I hear

One face shall never turn to me

As once this year ;

Shall never smile and turn and rest

On mine as there,

Nor one most sacred hand be pressed

Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,  
Half run before ;  
The youngest to the oldest singer  
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find  
Till all grief end,  
In holiest age our mightiest mind,  
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,  
If hope there be,  
O spirit that man's life left pure,  
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were  
Look earthward now :  
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,  
The imperial brow ;

Come back in sleep, for in the life  
Where thou art not  
We find none like thee. Time and  
strife  
And the world's lot

Move thee no more ; but love at least,  
And reverent heart,  
May move thee, royal and released  
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust  
Receive and keep,  
Keep safe his dedicated dust,  
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,  
Mix with thy name  
As morning-star with evening-star  
His faultless fame. 1866.

#### THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet,  
Here, where all trouble seems  
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot  
In doubtful dreams of dreams ;  
I watch the green field growing  
For reaping folk and sowing,  
For harvest time and mowing,  
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,  
And men that laugh and weep  
Of what may come hereafter  
For men that sow to reap :  
I am weary of days and hours,  
Blown buds of barren flowers,  
Desires and dreams and powers  
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,  
And far from eye or ear  
Wan waves and wet winds labor, ;  
Weak ships and spirits steer ;  
They drive adrift, and whither  
They wot not who make thither ;  
But no such winds blow hither,  
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,  
No heather-flower or vine,  
But bloomless buds of poppies,  
Green grapes of Proserpine,  
Pale beds of blowing rushes  
Where no leaf blooms or blushes,  
Save this whereout she crushes  
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,  
In fruitless fields of corn,  
They bow themselves and slumber  
All night till light is born ;  
And like a soul belated,  
In hell and heaven unmated,  
By cloud and mist abated  
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,  
He too with death shall dwell,  
Nor wake with wings in heaven,  
Nor weep for pains in hell ;  
Though one were fair as roses,  
His beauty clouds and closes ;  
And well though love reposes,  
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,  
Crowned with calm leaves, she  
stands  
Who gathers all things mortal  
With cold immortal hands ;  
Her languid lips are sweeter  
Than love's who fears to greet her  
To men that mix and meet her  
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,  
She waits for all men born ;  
Forgets the earth her mother,  
The life of fruits and corn ;  
And spring and seed and swallow  
Take wing for her and follow  
Where summer song rings hollow  
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,  
The old loves with wearier wings ;  
And all dead years draw thither,  
And all disastrous things ;  
Dead dreams of days forsaken

Blind buds that snows have shaken,  
Wild leaves that winds have taken,  
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,  
And joy was never sure;  
To-day will die to-morrow  
Time stoops to no man's lure;  
And love, grown faint and fretful  
With lips but half regretful  
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful  
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be  
That no life lives for ever;  
That dead men rise up never;  
That even the weariest river  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,  
Nor any change of light:  
Nor sound of waters shaken,  
Nor any sound or sight:  
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,  
Nor days nor things diurnal;  
Only the sleep eternal  
In an eternal night.

1866.

#### LOVE AT SEA

We are in love's land to-day;  
Where shall we go?  
Love, shall we start or stay,  
Or sail or row?  
There's many a wind and way,  
And never a May but May;  
We are in love's hand to-day;  
Where shall we go?

Our landwind is the breath  
Of sorrows kissed to death  
And joys that were:  
Our ballast is a rose;  
Our way lies where God knows  
And love knows where.  
We are in love's hand to-day—

Our seamen are fledged Loves,  
Our masts are bills of doves,  
Our decks fine gold;  
Our ropes are dead maids' hair,  
Our stores are love-shafts fair  
And manifold.  
We are in love's hand to-day—

Where shall we land you, sweet?  
On fields of strange men's feet,

Or fields near home?  
Or where the fire-flowers blow,  
Or where the flowers of snow  
Or flowers of foam?  
We are in love's hand to-day—

Land me, she says, where love  
Shows but one shaft, one dove,  
One heart, one hand.  
—A shore like that, my dear,  
Lies where no man will steer,  
No maiden land.  
*Imitated from Théophile Gautier.*  
1868.

#### SAPPHICS

ALL the night sleep came not upon my  
eyelids,  
Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a  
feather,  
Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of  
iron  
Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision  
Came without sleep over the seas and  
touched me,  
Softly touched mine eyelids and lips;  
and I too,  
Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite,  
Saw the hair unbound, and the feet un-  
sandalled  
Shine as fire of sunset on western waters:  
Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves  
that drew her,  
Looking always, looking with necks re-  
verted,  
Back to Lesbos, back to the hills where  
under  
Shone Mitylene;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves be-  
hind her  
Make a sudden thunder upon the waters.  
As the thunder flung from the strong  
unclosing  
Wings of a great wind.

So the goddess fled from her place, with  
awful  
Sound of feet and thunder of wings  
around her;  
While behind a clamor of singing women  
Severed the twilight.

Ah the singing, ah the delight, the passion !  
 All the Loves wept, listening ; sick with anguish,  
 Stood the crowned nine Muses about Apollo ;  
 Fear was upon them,

While the tenth sang wonderful things they knew not.  
 Ah, the tenth, the Lesbian ! the nine were silent,  
 None endured the sound of her song for weeping ;  
 Laurel by laurel,

Faded all their crowns ; but about her forehead,  
 Round her woven tresses and ashen temples  
 White as dead snow, paler than grass in summer,  
 Ravaged with kisses,

Shone a light of fire as a crown for ever.  
 Yea, almost the implacable Aphrodite  
 Paused, and almost wept ; such a song was that song ;  
 Yea, by her name too

Called her, saying, " Turn to me, O my Sappho ;"  
 Yet she turned her face from the Loves, she saw not  
 Tears or laughter darken immortal eyelids,  
 Heard not about her

Fearful fitful wings of the doves departing,  
 Saw not how the bosom of Aphrodite  
 Shook with weeping, saw not her shaken raiment,  
 Saw not her hands wrung ;

Saw the Lesbians kissing across their smitten  
 Lutes with lips more sweet than the sound of lute-strings,  
 Mouth to mouth and hand upon hand, her chosen,  
 Fairer than all men ;

Only saw the beautiful lips and fingers,  
 Full of songs and kisses and little whispers.  
 Full of music ; only beheld among them  
 Soar, as a bird soars

Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel,  
 Made of perfect sound and exceeding passion,  
 Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders,  
 Clothed with the wind's wings.

Then rejoiced she, laughing with love, and scattered  
 Roses, awful roses of holy blossom ;  
 Then the Loves thronged sadly with hidden faces  
 Round Aphrodite,

Then the Muses, stricken at heart, were silent ;  
 Yea, the gods waxed pale ; such a song was that song.  
 All reluctant, all with a fresh repulsion,  
 Fled from before her.

All withdrew long since, and the land was barren,  
 Full of fruitless women and music only.  
 Now perchance, when winds are assuaged at sunset,  
 Lulled at the dewfall,

By the gray sea-side, unassuaged, unheard of,  
 Unbeloved, unseen in the ebb of twilight,  
 Ghosts of outcast women return lamenting,  
 Purged not in Lethe,

Clothed about with flame and with tears, and singing  
 Songs that move the heart of the shaken heaven,  
 Songs that break the heart of the earth with pity.  
 Hearing, to hear them. 1866.

#### DEDICATION

##### [POEMS AND BALLADS, FIRST SERIES]

THE sea gives her shells to the shingle,  
 The earth gives her streams to the sea ;  
 There are many, but my gift is single,  
 My verses, the first-fruits of me.  
 Let the wind take the green and the gray leaf  
 Cast forth without fruit upon air ;  
 Take rose-leaf and vine-leaf and bay-leaf  
 Blown loose from the hair.

The night shakes them round me in  
legions,  
Dawn drives them before her like  
dreams ;  
Time sheds them like snows on strange  
regions,  
Swept shoreward on infinite streams ;  
Leaves pallid and sombre and ruddy,  
Dead fruits of the fugitive years ;  
Some stained as with wine and made  
bloody,  
And some as with tears.

Some scattered in seven years' traces,  
As they fell from the boy that was  
then ;  
Long left among idle green places,  
Or gathered but now among men ;  
On seas full of wonder and peril,  
Blown white round the capes of the  
north ;  
Or in islands where myrtles are sterile  
And loves bring not forth.

O daughters of dreams and of stories  
That life is not wearied of yet,  
Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,  
Félice and Yolande and Juliette,  
Shall I find you not still, shall I miss  
you,  
When sleep, that is true or that seems,  
Comes back to me hopeless to kiss you,  
O daughters of dreams ?

They are past as a slumber that passes,  
As the dew of a dawn of old time ;  
More frail than the shadows on glasses,  
More fleet than a wave or a rhyme.  
As the waves after ebb drawing sea-  
ward,  
When their hollows are full of the  
night,  
So the birds that flew singing to me-  
ward  
Recede out of sight.

The songs of dead seasons, that wander  
On wings of articulate words ;  
Lost leaves that the shore-wind may  
squander,  
Light flocks of untameable birds ;  
Some sang to me dreaming in class time  
And truant in hand as in tongue ;  
For the youngest were born of boy's pas-  
time,  
The eldest are young.

Is there shelter while life in them  
lingers,  
Is there hearing for songs that recede,

Tunes touched from a harp with men's  
fingers,  
Or blown with boy's mouth in a reed !  
Is there place in the land of your labor,  
Is there room in your world of de-  
light,  
Where change has not sorrow for neigh-  
bor  
And day has not night ?

In their wings though the sea-wind  
yet quivers,  
Will you spare not a space for them  
there  
Made green with the running of rivers  
And gracious with temperate air ;  
In the fields and the turreted cities  
That cover from sunshine and rain  
Fair passions and bountiful pities  
And loves without stain ?

In a land of clear colors and stories,  
In a region of shadowless hours,  
Where earth has a garment of glories  
And a murmur of musical flowers ;  
In woods where the spring half un-  
covers  
The flush of her amorous face,  
By the waters that listen for lovers,  
For these is there place ?

For the song-birds of sorrow, that  
muffle  
Their music as clouds do their fire :  
For the storm-birds of passion, that  
ruffle  
Wild wings in a wind of desire :  
In the stream of the storm as it settles  
Blown seaward, borne far from the  
sun,  
Shaken loose on the darkness like petals  
Dropped one after one ?

Though the world of your hands be more  
gracious  
And lovelier in lordship of things  
Clothed round by sweet art with the  
spacious  
Warm heaven of her imminent wings.  
Let them enter, unfledged and night  
fainting,  
For the love of old loves and lost  
times ;  
And receive in your palace of painting  
This revel of rhymes.

Though the seasons of man full of losses  
Make empty the years full of youth.  
If but one thing be constant in crosses,  
Change lays not her hand upon truth.

Hopes die, and their tombs are for token  
That the grief as the joy of them ends  
Ere time that breaks all men has broken  
The faith between friends.

Though the many lights dwindle to one  
light,

There is help if the heaven has one ;  
Though the skies be discrowned of the  
sunlight

And the earth dispossessed of the sun,  
They have moonlight and sleep for re-  
payment.

When, refreshed as a bride and set  
free,

With stars and sea-winds in her raiment,  
Night sinks on the sea. 1866.

#### AN APPEAL

ART thou indeed among these,  
Thou of the tyrannous crew,  
The kingdoms fed upon blood,  
O queen from of old of the seas,  
England, art thou of them too  
That drink of the poisonous flood,  
That hide under poisonous trees?

Nay, thy name from of old,  
Mother, was pure, or we dreamed ;  
Purer we held thee than this,  
Purer fain would we hold ;  
So goodly a glory it seemed,  
A fame so bounteous of bliss,  
So more precious than gold.

A praise so sweet in our ears,  
That thou in the tempest of things  
As a rock for a refuge shouldst stand,  
In the blood-red river of tears  
Poured forth for the triumph of kings ;  
A safeguard, a sheltering land,  
In the thunder and torrent of years.

Strangers came gladly to thee,  
Exiles, chosen of men,  
Safe for thy sake in thy shade,  
Sat down at thy feet and were free.  
So men spake of thee then ;  
Now shall their speaking be stayed ?  
Ah, so let it not be !

Not for revenge or affright,  
Pride, or a tyrannous lust,  
Cast from thee the crown of thy praise.  
Mercy was thine in thy might ;  
Strong when thou wert, thou wert just :  
Now, in the wrong-doing days,  
Cleave thou, thou at least, to the right.

How should one charge thee, how  
sway,  
Save by the memories that were ?  
Not thy gold nor the strength of thy  
ships,  
Nor the might of thine armies at bay,  
Made thee, mother, most fair ;  
But a word from republican lips  
Said in thy name in thy day.

Hast thou said it, and hast thou forgot ?  
Is thy praise in thine ears as a scoff ?  
Blood of men guiltless was shed,  
'Children, and souls without spot,  
Shed, but in places far off ;  
*Let slaughter no more be,* said  
Milton ; and slaughter was not.

Was it not said of thee too,  
Now, but now, by thy foes,  
By the slaves that had slain their France  
And thee would slay as they slew—  
" Down with her walls that enclose  
Freemen that eye us askance,  
Fugitives, men that are true ! "

This was thy praise or thy blame  
From bondsman or freeman—to be  
Pure from pollution of slaves,  
Clean of their sins, and thy name  
Bloodless, innocent, free ;  
Now if thou be not, thy waves  
Wash not from off thee thy shame.

Freeman he is not, but slave,  
Whoso in fear for the State  
Cries for surety of blood,  
Help of gibbet and grave ;  
Neither is any land great  
Whom, in her fear-stricken mood,  
These things only can save.

Lo ! how fair from afar,  
Taintless of tyranny, stands  
Thy mighty daughter, for years  
Who trod the winepress of war,—  
Shines with immaculate hands ;  
Slays not a foe, neither fears ;  
Stains not peace with a scar.

Be not as tyrant or slave,  
England ; be not as these,  
Thou that wert other than they.  
Stretch out thine hand, but to save ;  
Put forth thy strength, and release :  
Lest there arise, if thou slay,  
Thy shame as a ghost from the grave.  
November, 1867.

## HERTHA

I AM that which began ;  
 Out of me the years roll ;  
 Out of me God and man ;  
 I am equal and Whole ;  
 God changes, and man, and the form of  
 them bodily ; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,  
 Before ever the sea,  
 Or soft hair of the grass,  
 Or fair limbs of the tree,  
 Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches,  
 I was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources  
 First drifted and swam ;  
 Out of me are the forces  
 That save it or damn ;  
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-  
 beast and bird ; before God was, I  
 am.

Beside or above me  
 Nought is there to go ;  
 Love or unlove me,  
 Unknow me or know,  
 I am that which unloves me and loves ;  
 I am stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed  
 And the arrows that miss,  
 I the mouth that is kissed  
 And the breath in the kiss,  
 The search, and the sought, and the  
 seeker, the soul and the body that is.

I am that thing which blesses  
 My spirit elate ;  
 That which caresses  
 With hands uncreate  
 My limbs unbegotten that measure the  
 length of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,  
 Looking Godward, to cry  
 " I am I, thou art thou,  
 I am low, thou art high ? "  
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find  
 him ; find thou but thyself, thou  
 art I.

I the grain and the furrow,  
 The plough-cloven clod  
 And the ploughshare drawn  
 thorough,  
 The germ and the sod,  
 The deed and the doer, the seed and the  
 sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned  
 thee,  
 Child, underground ?  
 Fire that impassioned thee,  
 Iron that bound,  
 Dim changes of water, what thing of all  
 these hast thou known of or found ?

Canst thou say in thine heart  
 Thou has seen with thine eyes  
 With what cunning of art  
 Thou wast wrought in what  
 wise,  
 By what force of what stuff thou wast  
 shapen, and shown on my breast to  
 the skies ?

Who hath given, who hath sold it  
 thee,  
 Knowledge of me ?  
 Hath the wilderness told it thee ?  
 Hast thou learnt of the sea ?  
 Hast thou communed in spirit with  
 night ? have the winds taken coun-  
 sel with thee ?

Have I set such a star  
 To show light on thy brow  
 That thou sawest from afar  
 What I show to thee now ?  
 Have ye spoken as brethren together,  
 the sun and the mountains and thou ?

What is here, dost thou know it ?  
 What was, hast thou known ?  
 Prophet nor poet  
 Nor tripod nor throne  
 Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer,  
 but only thy mother alone.

Mother not maker,  
 Born, and not made ;  
 Though her children forsake her,  
 Allured or afraid,  
 Praying prayers to the God of their  
 fashion, she stirs not for all that  
 have prayed.

A creed is a rod,  
 And a crown is of night ;  
 But this thing is God,  
 To be man with thy might,  
 To grow straight in the strength of thy  
 spirit, and live out thy life as the  
 light.

I am in thee to save thee,  
 As my soul in thee saith,  
 Give thou as I gave thee,  
 Thy life-blood and breath,

Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers  
of thy thought, and red fruit of thy  
death.

Be the ways of thy giving  
As mine were to thee ;  
The free life of thy living,  
Be the gift of it free ;  
Not as servant to lord, nor as master to  
slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

O children of banishment,  
Souls overcast,  
Were the lights ye see vanish  
meant  
Always to last,  
Ye would know not the sun overshadowing  
the shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod  
The dim paths of the night  
Set the shadow called God  
In your skies to give light ;  
But the morning of manhood is risen, and  
the shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted  
That swells to the sky  
With frondage red-fruited,  
The life-tree am I ;  
In the buds of your lives is the sap of my  
leaves : ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion  
That take and that give,  
In their pity and passion  
That scourge and forgive,  
They are worms that are bred in the  
bark that falls off : they shall die  
and not live.

My own blood is what stanches  
The wounds in my bark :  
Stars caught in my branches  
Make day of the dark,  
And are worshipped as suns till the sun-  
rise shall tread out their fires as a  
spark.

Where dead ages hide under  
The live roots of the tree,  
In my darkness the thunder  
Makes utterance of me ;  
In the clash of my boughs with each  
other ye hear the waves sound of  
the sea.

That noise is of Time,  
As his feathers are spread  
And his feet set to climb

Through the boughs overhead,  
And my foliage rings round him and  
rustles, and branches are bent with  
his tread.

The storm-winds of ages  
Blow through me and cease,  
The war-wind that rages,  
The spring-wind of peace,  
Ere the breath of them roughen my  
tresses, ere one of my blossoms in-  
crease.

All sounds of all changes,  
All shadows and lights  
On the world's mountain-ranges  
And stream-riven heights,  
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and  
language of storm-clouds on earth-  
shaking nights ;

All forms of all faces,  
All works of all hands  
In unsearchable places  
Of time-stricken lands,  
All death and all life, and all reigns and  
all ruins, drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden  
And more than ye know,  
And my growth have no guerdon  
But only to grow,  
Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings  
above me or death worms below.

These too have their part in me,  
As I too in these ;  
Such fire is at heart in me,  
Such sap is this tree's,  
Which hath in it all sounds and all  
secrets of infinite lands and of seas.

In the spring-colored hours  
When my mind was as May's,  
There brake forth of me flowers  
By centuries of days,  
Strong blossoms with perfume of man-  
hood, shot out from my spirit as rays.

And the sound of them springing  
And smell of their shoots  
Were as warmth and sweet singing  
And strength to my roots ;  
And the lives of my children made per-  
fect with freedom of soul were my  
fruits.

I bid you but be ;  
I have need not of prayer ;  
I have need of you free



As your mouths of mine air ;  
That my heart may be greater within  
me, beholding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is  
Of faith ye espouse ;  
In me only the root is  
That blooms in your boughs ;  
Behold now your God that ye made you,  
to feed him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening  
Abysses ador'd,  
With dayspring and lightning  
For lamp and for sword,  
God thunders in heaven, and his angels  
are red with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful  
Toward Gods not of me,  
Was not I enough beautiful ?  
Was it hard to be free ?  
For behold, I am with you, am in you  
and of you ; look forth now and see.

Lo, wing'd with world's wonders,  
With miracles shod,  
With the fires of his thunders  
For raiment and rod,  
God trembles in heaven, and his angels  
are white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,  
His anguish is here :  
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,  
Grown gray from his fear ;  
And his hour taketh hold on him  
stricken, the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks  
him,  
Truth slays and forgives :  
But to you, as time takes him,  
This new thing it gives,  
Even love, the beloved Republic, that  
feeds upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,  
Truth only is whole,  
And the love of his giving  
Man's polestar and pole ;  
Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of  
my body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom ;  
One beam of mine eye ;  
One topmost blossom  
That scales the sky ;  
Man, equal and one with me, man that  
is made of me, man that is I. 1871.

### THE PILGRIMS

"WHO is your lady of love, O ye that  
<sup>pass</sup>  
Singing? and is it for sorrow of that  
which was  
That ye sing sadly, or dream of what  
shall be?  
For gladly at once and sadly it seems  
ye sing."

—"Our lady of love by you is unbe-  
holden  
For hands she hath none, nor eyes, nor  
lips, nor golden  
Treasure of hair, nor face nor form;  
But we  
That love, we know her more fair  
than any thing."

—"Is she a queen, having great gifts to  
give?"

—"Yea, these: that whoso hath seen  
her shall not live

Except he serve her sorrowing, with  
strange pain,  
Travail and bloodshedding and bit-  
terer tears;

And when she bids die he shall surely  
die.

And he shall leave all things under the  
sky,

And go forth naked under sun and  
rain,

And work and wait and watch out  
all his years."

—"Hath she on earth no place of habi-  
tation?"

—"Age to age calling, nation answer-  
ing nation.

Cries out, Where is she? and there is  
none to say;

For if she be not in the spirit of men,  
For if in the inward soul she hath no  
place,

In vain they cry unto her, seeking her  
face,

In vain their mouths make much of  
her; for they

Cry with vain tongues, till the heart  
lives again."

—"O ye that follow, and have ye no  
repentance?

For on your brows is written a mortal  
sentence,

An hieroglyph of sorrow, a fiery sign,  
That in your lives ye shall not pause  
or rest,

Nor have the sure sweet common love,  
nor keep

Friends and safe days, nor joy of life  
nor sleep."

—"These have we not, who have one  
thing, the divine  
Face and clear eyes of faith and  
fruitful breast."

—"And ye shall die before your thrones  
be won."

—"Yea, and the changed world and the  
liberal sun  
Shall move and shine without us, and  
we lie

Dead; but if she too move on earth,  
and live,  
But if the old world with all the old  
irons rent

Laugh and give thanks, shall we be not  
content?

Nay, we shall rather live, we shall not  
die,

Life being so little, and death so  
good to give."

—"And these men shall forget you."

"Yea, but we  
Shall be a part of the earth and the an-  
cient sea,

And heaven-high air august, and aw-  
ful fire,

And all things good; and no man's  
heart shall beat  
But somewhat in it of our blood once  
shed

Shall quiver and quicken, as now in us  
the dead

Blood of men slain and the old same  
life's desire

Plants in their fiery footprints our  
fresh feet."

—"But ye that might be clothed with  
all things pleasant,

Ye are foolish that put off the fair soft  
present,

That clothe yourselves with the cold  
future air;

When mother and father and ten-  
der sister and brother

And the old live love that was shall be  
as ye,

Dust, and no fruit of loving life shall  
be."

—"She shall be yet who is more than  
all these were,

Than sister or wife or father unto us  
or mother."

—"Is this worth life, is this, to win for  
wages?

Lo, the dead mouths of the awful gray-  
grown ages,

The venerable, in the past that is their  
prison,

In the outer darkness, in the un-  
opening grave,

Laugh, knowing how many as ye now  
say have said,

How many, and all are fallen, are fallen  
and dead:

Shall ye dead rise, and these dead have  
not risen?"

—"Not we but she, who is tender,  
and swift to save."

—"Are ye not weary and faint not by  
the way,

Seeing night by night devoured of day  
by day,

Seeing hour by hour consumed in sleep-  
less fire?

Sleepless; and ye too, when shall ye  
too sleep?"

—"We are weary in heart and head, in  
hands and feet,

And surely more than all things sleep  
were sweet,—

Than all things save the inexorable  
desire

Which whoso knoweth shall neither  
faint nor weep."

—"Is this so sweet that one were fain  
to follow?

Is this so sure where all men's hopes are  
hollow,

Even this your dream, that by much  
tribulation

Ye shall make whole flawed hearts,  
and bowed necks straight?"

—"Nay, though our life were blind, our  
death were fruitless,

Not therefore were the whole world's  
high hope rootless;

But man to man, nation would turn to  
nation,

And the old life live, and the old  
great word be great."

—"Pass on, then, and pass by us, and  
let us be,

For what light think ye after life to  
see?

And if the world fare better will ye  
know?

And if man triumph who shall seek  
you and say?"

—"Enough of light is this for one life's span,  
That all men born are mortal, but not man;  
And we men bring death lives by night to sow,  
That men may reap and eat and live by day." 1871.

## TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA

SEND but a song oversea for us,  
Heart of their hearts who are free,  
Heart of their singer, to be for us  
More than our singing can be;  
Ours, in the tempest at error,  
With no light but the twilight of terror;  
Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine leaves and grasses,  
And blown as a tree through and through  
With the winds of the keen mountain-passes,  
And tender as sun-smitten dew;  
Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes  
The wastes of your limitless lakes,  
Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic  
Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,  
With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,  
With thoughts as thunders in throng,  
With consonant ardors of chords  
That pierce men's souls as with swords  
And hale them hearing along.

Make us, too, music, to be with us  
As a word from a world's heart warm,  
To sail the dark as a sea with us,  
Full-sailed, outsing the storm,  
A song to put fire in our ears  
Whose burning shall burn up tears,  
Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,  
A word in the wind of cheer,  
To consume as with lightning the carrion  
That makes time foul for us here;  
In the air that our dead things infest  
A blast of the breath of the west,  
Till east way as west way is clear.

Out of the sun beyond sunset,  
From the evening whence morning  
shall be,  
With the rollers in measureless onset,  
With the van of the storming sea,

With the world-wide wind, with the breath  
That breaks ships driven upon death,  
With the passion of all things free,

With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,  
White myriads for death to bestride  
In the charge of the ruining Atlantic  
Where deaths by regiments ride,  
With clouds and clamors of waters,  
With a long note shriller than slaughter's  
On the furrowless fields world-wide,

With terror, with ardor and wonder,  
With the soul of the season that wakes  
When the weight of a whole year's  
thunder  
In the tidestream of autumn breaks,  
Let the flight of the wide-winged word  
Come over, come in and be heard,  
Take form and fire for our sakes.

For a continent bloodless with travail  
Here toils and brawls as it can,  
And the web of it who shall unravel  
Of all that peer on the plan;  
Would fain grow men, but they grow  
not,  
And fain be free, but they know not  
One name for freedom and man?

One name, not twain for division;  
One thing, not twain, from the birth;  
Spirit and substance and vision,  
Worth more than worship is worth;  
Unbeheld, unadored, undivined,  
The cause, the centre, the mind,  
The secret and sense of the earth.

Here as a weakling in irons,  
Here as a weanling in bands  
As a prey that the stake-net environs,  
Our life that we looked for stands;  
And the man-child naked and dear,  
Democracy, turns on us here  
Eyes trembling, with tremulous hands.

It sees not what season shall bring to it  
Sweet fruit of its bitter desire;  
Few voices it hears yet sing to it,  
Few pulses of hearts reaspire:  
Foresees not time, nor forehears  
The noises of imminent years,  
Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:

When crowned and weaponed and curb-  
less  
It shall walk without helm or shield  
The bare burnt furrows and herbless

Of war's last flame-stricken field,  
Till godlike, equal with time,  
It stand in the sun sublime,  
In the godhead of man revealed.

Round your people and over them  
Light like raiment is drawn,  
Close as a garment to cover them  
Wrought not of mail nor of lawn :  
Here, with hope hardly to wear,  
Naked nations and bare  
Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.

Chains are here, and a prison,  
Kings, and subjects, and shame :  
If the God upon you be arisen,  
How should our songs be the same ?  
How in confusion of change,  
How shall we sing, in a strange  
Land songs praising his name ?

God is buried and dead to us,  
Even the spirit of earth,  
Freedom : so have they said to us,  
Some with mocking and mirth,  
Some with heartbreak and tears :  
And a God without eyes, without ears,  
Who shall sing of him, dead in the  
birth ?

The earth-god Freedom, the lonely  
Face lightening, the footprint unshod.  
Not as one man crucified only  
Nor scourged with but one life's rod :  
The soul that is substance of nations,  
Reincarnate with fresh generations ;  
The great god Man, which is God.

But in weariest of years and obscurest  
Doth it live not at heart of all things  
The one God and one spirit, a purest  
Life, fed from unstanchable springs ?  
Within love, within hatred it is,  
And its seed in the stripe as the kiss,  
And in slaves is the germ, and in  
kings.

Freedom we call it, for holier  
Name of the soul's there is none ;  
Surelier it labors, if slower,  
Than the metres of star or of sun ;  
Slower than life unto breath,  
Surelier than time unto death,  
It moves till its labor be done.

Till the motion be done and the measure  
Circling through season and clime,  
Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,  
Vision of virtue and crime ;  
Till consummate with conquering eyes,

A soul disembodied, it rise  
From the body transfigured of time.

Till it rise and remain and take station  
With the stars of the world that re-  
joice ;  
Till the voice of its heart's exultation  
Be as theirs an invariable voice,  
By no discord of evil estranged,  
By no pause, by no breach in it changed,  
By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,  
With the spirit, the star, and the sod :  
With the kingless and king-stricken  
nations,  
With the cross, and the chain, and  
therod ;  
The most high, the most secret, most  
lonely,  
The earth-soul Freedom, that only  
Lives, and that only is God. 1871.

#### FROM MATER TRIUMPHALIS

##### [TO LIBERTY]

I am thine harp between thine hands,  
O mother !  
All my strong chords are strained  
with love of thee.  
We grapple in love and wrestle, as each  
with other  
Wrestle the wind and the reluctant  
sea.

I am no courtier of thee sober-suited,  
Who loves a little for a little pay.  
Me not thy winds and storms, nor  
thrones disrooted,  
Nor molten crowns, nor thine own  
sins, dismay.

Sinned hast thou sometime, therefore  
art thou sinless ;  
Stained hast thou been, who art there-  
fore without stain ;  
Even as man's soul is kin to thee, but  
kinless  
Thou, in whose womb Time sows the  
all-various grain.

I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful  
mother !  
I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy  
grace.  
How were it with me then, if ever  
another  
Should come to stand before thee in  
this my place ?

I am the trumpet at thy lips, thy clarion,  
Full of thy cry, sonorous with thy  
breath;

The graves of souls born worms, and  
creeds grown carrion

Thy blast of judgment fills with fires  
of death.

Thou art the player whose organ-keys  
are thunders,

And I, beneath thy foot, the pedal  
pressed;

Thou art the ray whereat the rent night  
sunders,

And I the cloudbelt borne upon thy  
breast.

I shall burn up before thee, pass and  
perish,

As haze in sunrise on the red sea-line;  
But thou from dawn to sunset shalt  
cherish

The thoughts that led and souls that  
lighted mine.

Reared between night and noon and  
truth and error,

Each twilight-travelling bird that  
trills and screams

Sickens at midday, nor can face for  
terror

The imperious heaven's inevitable  
extremes.

I have no spirit of skill with equal  
fingers

At sign to sharpen or to slacken  
strings;

I keep no time of song with gold-perched  
singers

And chirp of linnets on the wrists of  
kings.

I am thy storm-thrush of the days that  
darken,

Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy  
bark

To port through night and tempest: if  
thou hearken,

My voice is in thy heaven before the  
lark.

My song is in the mist that hides thy  
morning,

My cry is up before the day for thee;  
I have heard thee and beheld thee and  
give warning.

Before thy wheels divide the sky and  
sea.

Birds shall wake with thee voiced and  
feathered fairer,

To see in summer what I see in spring;  
I have eyes and heart to endure thee,

O thunder-bearer,

And they shall be who shall have  
tongues to sing.

I have love at least, and have not fear,  
and part not

From thine unnavigable and wingless  
way;

Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou  
art not.

Nor all thy night long have denied thy  
day.

Darkness to daylight shall lift up thy  
paean.

Hill to hill thunder, vale cry back to  
vale,

With wind-notes as of eagles Æschy-  
lean,

And Sappho singing in the nightin-  
gale.

Sung to by mighty sons of dawn and  
daughters,

Of this night's songs thine ear shall  
keep but one,—

That supreme song which shook the  
channelled waters,

And called thee skyward as God calls  
the sun.

Come, though all heaven again be fire  
above thee;

Though death before thee come to  
clear thy sky;

Let us but see in his thy face who love  
thee;

Yea, though thou slay us, arise, and  
let us die. 1871.

#### COR CORDIUM

[SHELLEY]

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's  
fire,

Hid round with flowers and all the  
bounty of bloom;

O wonderful and perfect heart, for whom  
The lyrist liberty made life a lyre;

O heavenly heart, at whose most dear  
desire

Dead love, living and singing, cleft his  
tomb,

And with him risen and regent in death's  
room  
All day thy choral pulses rang full choir;  
O heart whose beating blood was run-  
ning song,  
O sole thing sweeter than thine own  
songs were,  
Help us for thy free love's sake to be  
free,  
True for thy truth's sake, for thy  
strength's sake strong,  
Till very liberty make clean and fair  
The nursing earth as the sepulchral sea.  
1871.

"NON DOLET."

It does not hurt. She looked along the  
knife  
Smiling, and watched the thick drops  
mix and run  
Down the sheer blade; not that which  
had been done  
Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman  
wife,  
But that which was to do yet ere the  
strife  
Could end for each forever, and the sun:  
Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet  
won  
While pain had power upon her hus-  
band's life.  
It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art more  
Than bride to bridegroom; how shalt  
thou not take  
The gift love's blood has reddened for  
thy sake?  
Was not thy lifeblood given for us be-  
fore?  
And if love's heartblood can avail thy  
need,  
And thou not die, how should it hurt  
indeed?  
1871.

THE OBLATION

Ask nothing more of me, sweet,  
All I can give you I give.  
Heart of my heart, were it more,  
More would be laid at your feet:  
Love that should help you to live,  
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give  
Once to have sense of you more,  
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,  
Think you and breathe you and live,  
Swept of your wings as they soar,  
Trod by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more  
Give you but love of you, sweet:  
He that hath more, let him give;  
He that hath wings, let him soar;  
Mine is the heart at your feet  
Here, that must love you to live.  
1871.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland  
and highland,  
At the sea-down's edge between wind-  
ward and lee,  
Walled round with rocks as an inland  
island,  
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.  
A girdle of brushwood and thorn en-  
closes  
The steep square slope of the blos-  
somless bed  
Where the weeds that grew green from  
the graves of its roses  
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and  
broken,  
To the low last edge of the long lone  
land.  
If a step should sound or a word be  
spoken,  
Would a ghost not rise at the strange  
guest's hand?  
So long have the gray bare walks lain  
guestless,  
Through branches and briars if a man  
make way,  
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's,  
restless  
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and  
stified  
That crawls by a track none turn to  
climb  
To the strait waste place that the years  
have rifled  
Of all but the thorns that are touched  
not of time.  
The thorns he spares when the rose is  
taken;  
The rocks are left when he wastes the  
plain;  
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-  
shaken,  
These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that  
falls not; [plots are dry;  
As the heart of a dead man the seed-

From the thicket of thorns whence the  
 nightingale calls not,  
 Could she call, there were never a rose  
 to reply.  
 Over the meadows that blossom and  
 wither,  
 Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song.  
 Only the sun and the rain come hither  
 All year long.

The sun burns sear, and the rain dishev-  
 els  
 One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless  
 breath.  
 Only the wind here hovers and revels  
 In a round where life seems barren as  
 death.  
 Here there was laughing of old, there  
 was weeping,  
 Haply, of lovers none ever will know,  
 Whose eyes went seaward a hundred  
 sleeping  
 Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood,  
 "Look thither,"  
 Did he whisper? "Look forth from  
 the flowers to the sea;  
 For the foam-flowers endure when the  
 rose-blossoms wither,  
 And men that love lightly may die—  
 But we?"  
 And the same wind sang, and the same  
 waves whitened,  
 And or ever the garden's last petals  
 were shed,  
 In the lips that had whispered, the eyes  
 that had lightened,  
 Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and  
 then went whither?  
 And were one to the end—but what  
 end who knows?  
 Love deep as the sea as a rose must  
 wither,  
 As the rose-red seaweed that mocks  
 the rose.  
 Shall the dead take thought for the dead  
 to love them?  
 What love was ever as deep as a grave?  
 They are loveless now as the grass above  
 them  
 Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,  
 Not known of the cliffs and the fields  
 and the sea.  
 Not a breath of the time that has been  
 hovers

In the air now soft with a summer to  
 be.  
 Not a breath shall there sweeten the  
 seasons hereafter  
 Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh  
 now or weep,  
 When, as they that are free now of weep-  
 ing and laughter,  
 We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;  
 Here change may come not till all  
 change end.  
 From the graves they have made they  
 shall rise up never.  
 Who have left naught living to rav-  
 age and rend.  
 Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild  
 ground growing.  
 When the sun and the rain live, these  
 shall be;  
 Till a last wind's breath upon all these  
 blowing  
 Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff  
 crumble,  
 Till terrace and meadow the deep  
 gulfs drink,  
 Till the strength of the waves of the high  
 tides humble  
 The fields that lessen, the rocks that  
 shrink,  
 Here now in his triumph where all things  
 falter,  
 Stretched out on the spoils that his  
 own hand spread,  
 As a god self-slain on his own strange  
 altar,  
 Death lies dead.

July, 1876.

#### A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND

I HID my heart in a nest of roses,  
 Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;  
 In a softer bed than the soft white snow's  
 is,  
 Under the roses I hid my heart.  
 Why would it sleep not? why should  
 it start,  
 When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?  
 What made sleep flutter his wings and  
 part?  
 Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,  
 And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's  
 dart;

Lie still, for the wind on the warm seas  
dozes,  
And the wind is unquieter yet than  
thou art.  
Does a thought in thee still as a  
thorn's wound smart?  
Does the fang still fret thee of hope de-  
ferred?  
What bids the lips of thy sleep dispart?  
Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm en-  
closes,  
It never was writ in the traveller's  
chart,  
And sweet on its trees as the fruit that  
grows is,  
It never was sold in the merchant's  
mart.  
The swallows of dreams through its  
dim fields dart,  
And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops  
heard;  
No hound's note wakens the wild-  
wood hart,  
Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOI

In the world of dreams I have chosen  
my part,  
To sleep for a season and hear no word  
Of true love's truth or of light love's art,  
Only the song of a secret bird.  
September, 1876.

A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON,

PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS

BIRD of the bitter bright gray golden  
morn,  
Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous  
years,  
First of us all and sweetest singer born,  
Whose far shrill note the world of  
new men hears  
Cleave the cold shuddering shade as  
twilight clears;  
When song new-born put off the old  
world's attire  
And felt its tune on her changed lips ex-  
pire,  
Writ foremost on the roll of them that  
came  
Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
name!

Alas, the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,  
That clothed thy life with hopes and  
sins and fears,  
And gave thee stones for bread and tares  
for corn  
And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy  
starveling peers,  
Till death clipt close their flight with  
shameful shears;  
Till shifts came short and loves were  
hard to hire,  
When lilt of song nor twitch of twang-  
ling wire  
Could buy thee bread or kisses; when  
light fame  
Spurned like a ball and haled through  
brake and briar,  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
name!

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled  
and torn!  
Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with  
light quick tears!  
Poor perfect voice, most blithe when  
most forlorn,  
That rings athwart the sea whence no  
man steers,  
Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells  
in our ears!  
What far delight has cooled the fierce  
desire  
That, like some ravenous bird, was  
strong to tire  
On that frail flesh and soul consumed  
with flame,  
But left more sweet than roses to respire,  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
name?

ENVOI

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears  
and fire,  
A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;  
Shame soiled thy song, and song as-  
soiled thy shame.  
But from thy feet now death has washed  
the mire,  
Love reads out first at head of all our  
quire,  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
name. September, 1877.

TO LOUIS KOSSUTH

LIGHT of our fathers' eyes, and in our  
own  
Star of the unsetting sunset! for thy  
name,



That on the front of noon was as a flame  
 In the great year nigh twenty years ago  
 When all the heavens of Europe shook  
 and shone  
 With stormy wind and lightning, keeps  
 its fame  
 And bears its witness all day through  
 the same;  
 Not for past days and great deeds past  
 alone,  
 Kossuth, we praise thee as our Landor  
 praised,  
 But that now too we know thy voice up-  
 raised,  
 Thy voice, the trumpet of the truth of  
 God,  
 Thine hand, the thunder-bearer's, raised  
 to smite  
 As with heaven's lightning for a sword  
 and rod  
 Men's heads abased before the Muscovite.  
 February, 1878.

## CHILD'S SONG

WHAT is gold worth, say,  
 Worth for work or play,  
 Worth to keep or pay,  
 Hide or throw away,  
 Hope about or fear?  
 What is love worth, pray?  
 Worth a tear?

Golden on the mould  
 Lie the dead leaves rolled  
 Of the wet woods old,  
 Yellow leaves and cold,  
 Woods without a dove;  
 Gold is worth but gold;  
 Love's worth love. 1878.

## TRIADS

## I

The word of the sun to the sky,  
 The word of the wind to the sea,  
 The word of the moon to the night,  
 What may it be?

The sense of the flower to the fly,  
 The sense of the bird to the tree,  
 The sense of the cloud to the light,  
 Who can tell me?

The song of the fields to the kye,  
 The song of the lime to the bee,  
 The song of the depth to the height,  
 Who knows all three?

## II

The message of April to May,  
 That May sends on into June  
 And June gives out to July  
 For birthday boon;

The delight of the dawn in the day,  
 The delight of the day in the noon,  
 The delight of a song in a sigh  
 That breaks the tune;

The secret of passing away,  
 The cast of the change of the moon,  
 None knows it with ear or with eye,  
 But all will soon.

## III

The live wave's love for the shore,  
 The shore's for the wave as it dies,  
 The love of the thunder-fire  
 That sears the skies—

We shall know not though life wax  
 hoar,  
 Till all life, spent into sighs,  
 Burn out as consumed with desire  
 Of death's strange eyes;

Till the secret be secret no more  
 In the light of one hour as it flies,  
 Be the hour as of suns that expire  
 Or suns that rise. 1878.

## ON THE CLIFFS

ἡμερόφωρος ἀνθῶν (SAPPHO)

BETWEEN the moondawn and the sun-  
 down here  
 The twilight hangs half starless; half  
 the sea  
 Still quivers as for love or pain or fear  
 Or pleasure mightier than these all may  
 be.

A man's live heart might beat  
 Wherein a God's with mortal blood  
 should meet  
 And fill its pulse too full to bear the  
 strain  
 With fear or love or pleasure's twin-born,  
 pain.

Fiercely the gaunt woods to the grim  
 soil cling  
 That bears for all fair fruits  
 Wan wild sparse flowers of windy and  
 wintry spring

Between the tortive serpent-shapen roots  
 Wherethrough their dim growth hardly  
 strikes and shoots  
 And shows one gracious thing;

Hardly, to speak for summer one sweet  
word  
Of summer's self scarce heard.  
But higher the steep green sterile fields,  
thicket  
With flowerless hawthorn even to the  
upward verge  
Whence the woods gathering watch new  
cliffs emerge,  
Higher than their highest of crowns  
that sea-winds fret.  
Holds fast, for all that night or wind can  
say,  
Some pale pure color yet,  
Too dim for green and luminous for gray.  
Between the climbing inland cliffs above  
And these beneath that breast and break  
the bay,  
A barren peace too soft for hate or love  
Broods on an hour too dim for night or  
day.  
O wind, O wingless wind that walk'st  
the sea,  
Weak wind, wing-broken, wearier wind  
than we,  
Who are yet not spirit-broken, maimed  
like thee,  
Who wail not in our inward night as  
thou  
In the outer darkness now,  
What word has the old sea given thee  
for mine ear  
From thy faint lips to hear?  
For some word would she send me, know-  
ing not how.  
Nay, what far other word  
Than ever of her was spoken, or of me  
Or all my winged white kinsfolk of the  
sea  
Between fresh wave and wave was ever  
heard,  
Cleaves the clear dark enwinding tree  
with tree  
Too close for stars to separate and to see  
Enmeshed in multitudinous unity?  
What voice of what strong God hath  
stormed and stirred  
The fortified rock of silence, rent apart  
Even to the core Night's all maternal  
heart?  
What voice of God grown heavenlier in  
a bird,  
Make keener of edge to smite  
Than lightning.—yea, thou knowest, O  
mother Night,  
Keen as that cry from thy strange chil-  
dren sent<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In Aeschylus' Eumenides.

Wherewith the Athenian judgment-  
shrine was rent,  
For wrath that all their wrath was vainly  
spent,  
Their wrath for wrong made right  
By justice in her own divine despite  
That bade pass forth unblamed  
The sinless matricide and unashamed?  
Yea, what new cry is this, what note  
more bright  
Than their song's wing of words was  
dark of flight.  
What word is this thou hast heard,  
Thine and not thine or theirs, O Night,  
what word  
More keen than lightning and more  
sweet than light?  
As all men's hearts grew godlike in one  
bird  
And all those hearts cried on thee, cry-  
ing with might,  
Hear us, O mother Night!  
Dumb is the mouth of darkness as of  
death:  
Light, sound and life are one  
In the eyes and lips of dawn that draw  
the sun  
To hear what first child's word with  
glimmering breath  
Their weak wan weanling child the  
twilight saith;  
But night makes answer none.  
God, if thou be god,—bird, if bird thou  
be,—  
Do thou then answer me.  
For but one word, what wind soever  
blow,  
Is blown up usward ever from the sea.  
In fruitless years of youth dead long  
ago [and snow  
And deep beneath their own dead leaves  
Buried, I heard with bitter heart and sere  
The same sea's word unchangeable, nor  
knew  
But that mine own life-days were  
changeless too,  
And sharp and salt with unshed tear on  
tear,  
And cold and fierce and barren; and  
my soul,  
Sickenings, swam weakly with bated  
breath  
In a deep sea like death,  
And felt the wind buffet her face with  
brine  
Hard, and harsh thought on thought in  
long bleak roll

Blown by keen gusts of memory sad as  
thine  
Heap the weight up of pain, and break,  
and leave  
Strength scarce enough to grieve  
In the sick heavy spirit, unmanned with  
strife  
Of waves that beat at the tired lips of  
life.

Nay, sad may be man's memory, sad  
may be  
The dream he weaves him as for shadow  
of thee,  
But scarce one breathing-space, one  
heartbeat long,  
Wilt thou take shadow of sadness on thy  
song.  
Not thou, being more than man or man's  
desire,  
Being bird and God in one,  
With throat of gold and spirit of the  
sun;  
The sun whom all our souls and songs  
call sire,  
Whose godhead gave thee, chosen of all  
our quire,  
Thee only of all that serve, of all that  
sing  
Before our sire and king,  
Borne up some space on time's world-  
wandering wing,  
This gift, this doom, to bear till time's  
wing tire—  
Life everlasting of eternal fire.

Thee only of all; yet can no memory say  
How many a night and day  
My heart has been as thy heart, and my  
life  
As thy life is, a sleepless hidden thing,  
Full of the thirst and hunger of winter  
and spring,  
That seeks its food not in such love or  
strife  
As fill men's hearts with passionate  
hours and rest.  
From no loved lips and on no loving  
breast  
Have I sought ever for such gifts as bring  
Comfort, to stay the secret soul with  
sleep.  
The joys, the loves, the labors, whence  
men reap  
Rathe fruit of hopes and fears,  
I have made not mine; the best of all  
my days  
Have been as those fair fruitless summer  
strays,

Those water-waifs that but the sea-wind  
steers,  
Flakes of glad foam or flowers on foot-  
less ways  
That take the wind in season and the  
sun,  
And when the wind wills is their season  
done.

For all my days as all thy days from  
birth  
My heart as thy heart was in me as  
thee,  
Fire; and not all the fountains of the  
sea  
Have waves enough to quench it, nor on  
earth  
Is fuel enough to feed,  
While day sows night, and night sows  
day for seed.

We were not marked for sorrow, thou  
nor I,  
For joy nor sorrow, sister, were we made,  
To take delight and grief to live and  
die,  
Assuaged by pleasures or by pains af-  
frayed  
That melt men's hearts and alter; we  
retain  
A memory mastering pleasure and all  
pain,  
A spirit within the sense of ear and eye,  
A soul behind the soul, that seeks and  
sings  
And makes our life move only with its  
wings  
And feed but from its lips, that in re-  
turn  
Feed of our hearts wherein the old fires  
that burn  
Have strength not to consume  
Nor glory enough to exalt us past our  
doom.

*Ah, ah, the doom (thou knowest whence  
rang that wail)  
Of the shrill nightingale!  
(From whose wild lips, thou knowest,  
that wail was thrown)  
For round about her have the great gods  
cast  
A wing-borne body, and clothed her close  
and fast  
With a sweet life that hath no part in  
moan.  
But me, for me (how hadst thou heart to  
hear?) [spear.  
Remains a sundering with the two-edged*

*Ah, for her doom!* so cried in presage  
 then  
 The bodeful bonds slave of the king of  
 men,  
 And might not win her will.  
 Too close the entangling dragnet woven  
 of crime,  
 The snare of ill new-born of elder ill,  
 The curse of new time for an elder  
 time,  
 Had caught and held her yet,  
 Enmeshed intolerably in the intolerant  
 net,  
 Who thought with craft to mock the  
 God most high,  
 And win by wiles his crown of prophecy  
 From the sun's hand sublime,  
 As God were man, to spare or to forget.

But thou,—the gods have given thee and  
 forgiven thee  
 More than our master gave  
 That strange-eyed, spirit-wounded,  
 strange-tongued slave  
 There questing houndlike where the  
 roofs red-wet  
 Reeked as a wet red grave.  
 Life everlasting has their strange grace  
 given thee,  
 Even hers whom thou wast wont to sing  
 and serve  
 With eyes, but not with song, too swift  
 to swerve;  
 Yet might not even thine eyes estranged  
 estrange her,  
 Who seeing thee too, but inly, burn and  
 bleed  
 Like that pale princess-priest of Priam's  
 seed,  
 For stranger service gave thee guerdon,  
 stranger  
 If this indeed be guerdon, this indeed  
 Her mercy, this thy meed—  
 That thou, being more than all we born,  
 being higher  
 Than all heads crowned of him that only  
 gives  
 The light whereby man lives,  
 The bay that bids man moved of God's  
 desire  
 Lay hand on lute or lyre,  
 Set lip to trumpet or deflowered green  
 reed—  
 If this were given thee for a grace in-  
 deed,  
 That thou, being first of all these, thou  
 alone  
 Shouldst have the grace to die not, but  
 to live,

And loose nor change one pulse of song,  
 one tone  
 Of all that were thy lady's and thine  
 own,  
 The lady's whom thou criest on to for-  
 give,  
 Thou, priest and sacrifice on the altar-  
 stone  
 Where none may worship not of all that  
 live,  
 Love's priestess, errant on dark ways  
 diverse;  
 If this were grace indeed for Love to  
 give,  
 If this indeed were blessing and no  
 curse.

Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy  
 of song,  
 Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain  
 of love,  
 Name above all names that are lights  
 above,  
 We have lov'd, prais'd, pitied, crown'd,  
 and done thee wrong.  
 O thou past praise and pity; thou the  
 sole  
 Utterly deathless, perfect only and  
 whole  
 Immortal, body and soul.  
 For over all whom time hath overpast  
 The shadow of sleep inexorable is cast,  
 The implacable sweet shadow of perfect  
 sleep  
 That gives not back what life gives death  
 to keep;  
 Yea, all that liv'd and lov'd and sang  
 and sinn'd  
 Are all borne down death's cold, sweet,  
 soundless wind  
 That blows all night and knows not  
 whom its breath,  
 Darkling, may touch to death:  
 But one that wind hath touch'd and  
 changed not,—one  
 Whose body and soul are parcel of the  
 sun;  
 One that earth's fire could burn not, nor  
 the sea  
 Quench; nor might human doom take  
 hold on thee;  
 All praise, all pity, all dreams have done  
 thee wrong,  
 All love, with eyes love-blinded from  
 above;  
 Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain  
 of love,  
 Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy  
 of song.

Hast thou none other answer then for  
me  
Than the air may have of thee,  
Or the earth's warm woodlands girdling  
with green girth  
Thy secret, sleepless, burning life on  
earth,  
Or even the sea that once, being woman  
crown'd  
And girt with fire and glory of anguish  
round,  
Thou wert so fain to seek to, fain to  
crave  
If she would hear thee and save  
And give thee comfort of thy great  
green grave?  
Because I have known thee always who  
thou art,  
Thou knowest, have known thee to thy  
heart's own heart,  
Nor ever have given light ear to storied  
song  
That did thy sweet name sweet unwit-  
ting wrong,  
Nor ever have called thee nor would call  
for shame,  
Thou knowest, but inly, by thine only  
name,  
Sappho—because I have known thee  
and loved, hast thou  
None other answer now?  
As brother and sister were we, child  
and bird,  
Since thy first Lesbian word  
Flamed on me, and I knew not whence  
I knew  
This was the song that struck my whole  
soul through,  
Pierced my keen spirit of sense with  
edge more keen,  
Even when I knew not—even ere sooth  
was seen—  
When thou wast but the tawny sweet  
winged thing  
Whose cry was but of spring,  
  
And yet even so thine ear should hear  
me—yea,  
Hear me this nightfall by this northland  
bay,  
Even for their sake whose loud good  
word I had,  
Singing of thee in the all-beloved clime  
Once, where the windy wine of spring  
makes mad  
Our sisters of Majano, who kept time  
Clear to my choral rhyme.  
Yet was the song acclaimed of these  
aloud

Whose praise had made mute humble-  
ness misproud,  
The song with answering song ap-  
plauded thus,  
But of that Daulian dream of Itylus.  
So but for love's love haply was it—nay,  
How else?—that even their song took  
my song's part,  
For love of love and sweetness of sweet  
heart,  
Or god-given glorious madness of mid  
May  
And heat of heart and hunger and  
thirst to sing,  
Full of the new wine of the wind of  
spring.

Or if this were not, and it be not sin  
To hold myself in spirit of thy sweet  
kin,  
In heart and spirit of song;  
If this my great love do thy grace no  
wrong,  
Thy grace that gave me grace to dwell  
therein;  
If thy gods thus be my gods, and their  
will  
Made my song part of thy song—even  
such part  
As man's hath of God's heart—  
And my life like as thy life to fulfil;  
What have our gods then given us?  
Ah, to thee  
Sister, much more, much happier than  
to me,  
Much happier things they have given,  
and more of grace  
Than falls to man's light race;  
For lighter are we, all our love and pain  
Lighter than thine, who knowest of  
time or place  
Thus much, that place nor time  
Can heal or hurt or lull or change  
again  
The singing soul that makes his soul  
sublime  
Who hears the far fall of its fire-fledged  
rhyme  
Fill darkness as with bright and burning  
rain,  
Till all the live gloom inly glows, and  
light  
Seems with the sound to cleave the core  
of night.  
  
The singing soul that moves thee, and  
that moved  
When thou wast woman, and their  
songs divine

Who mixed for Grecian mouths heav-  
 en's lyric wine  
 Fell dumb, fell down reproved  
 Before one sovereign Lesbian song of  
 thine.  
 That soul, though love and life had fain  
 held fast,  
 Wind-winged with fiery music, rose  
 and past  
 Through the indrawn hollow of earth  
 and heaven and hell,  
 As through some strait sea-shell  
 The wide sea's immemorial song,—the  
 sea  
 That sings and breathes in strange men's  
 ears of thee  
 How in her barren bride bed, void and  
 vast,  
 Even thy soul sang itself to sleep at last.  
 To sleep? Ah, then, what song is this,  
 that here  
 Makes all the night one ear,  
 One ear fulfilled and mad with music,  
 one  
 Heart kindling as the heart of heaven,  
 to hear  
 A song more fiery than the awakening  
 sun  
 Sings, when his song sets fire  
 To the air and clouds that build the  
 dead night's pyre?  
*O thou of divers-colored mind, O thou  
 Deathless, God's daughter, subtle-souled*  
 —lo, now,  
 Now to the song above all songs, in flight  
 Higher than the day-star's height,  
 And sweet as sound the moving wings  
 of night!  
*Thou of the divers-colored seat—behold,*  
*Her very song of old!—*  
*O deathless, O God's daughter, subtle-*  
*souled!*  
 That same cry through this boskage  
 overhead  
 Rings round reiterated,  
 Palpitates as the last palpitated,  
 The last that panted through her lips  
 and died  
 Not down this gray north sea's half  
 sapped cliff-side  
 That crumbles toward the coastline,  
 year by year  
 More near the sands and near:  
 The last loud lyric fiery cry she cried,  
 Heard once on heights Leucadian,—  
 heard not here.  
 Not here; for this that fires our north-  
 land night,

This is the song that made  
 Love fearful, even the heart of love  
 afraid,  
 With the great anguish of its great de-  
 light.  
 No swan-song, no far-fluttering half-  
 drawn breath,  
 No word that love of love's sweet nature  
 saith,  
 No dirge that lulls the narrowing lids of  
 death,  
 No healing hymn of peace-prevented  
 strife,—  
 This is her song of life.

*I loved thee,—hark, one tenderer note  
 than all—*  
*At this, of old time, once—one low long  
 fall,*  
*Sighing—one long low lovely loveless  
 fall,*  
*Dying—one pause in song so flamelike  
 fast—*  
*At this, long since in old time overpast—*  
*One soft first pause and last,*  
*One,—then the old rage of rapture's  
 fieriest rain*  
 Storms all the music-maddened night  
 again.

*Child of God, close craftswoman, I be-  
 seech thee*  
*Bid not ache nor agony break nor mas-  
 ter,*  
*Lady, my spirit—*  
*O thou her mistress, might her cry not  
 reach thee?*  
 Our Lady of all men's loves, could Love  
 go past her,  
 Pass, and not hear it?

She hears not as she heard not: hears  
 not me,  
 O trebled-natured mystery—how should  
 she  
 Hear, or give ear?—who heard and  
 heard not thee;  
 Heard and went past, and heard not;  
 but all time  
 Hears all that all the ravin of his years  
 Hath cast not wholly out of all men's  
 ears  
 And dulled to death with deep dense  
 funeral chime  
 Of their reiterate rhyme.  
 And now of all songs uttering all her  
 praise,  
 All hers who had thy praise and did thee  
 wrong,

Abides one song yet of her lyric days,  
Thine only, this thy song.

O soul triune, woman and god and  
bird,  
Man, man at least has heard.

All ages call thee conqueror, and thy  
cry  
The mightiest as the least beneath the  
sky

Whose heart was ever set to song, or  
stirred

With wind of mounting music blown  
more high

Than wildest wing may fly,  
Hath heard or hears,—even Æschylus  
as I.

But when thy name was woman, and  
thy word

Human,—then, haply, surely then me-  
seems

This thy bird's note was heard on earth  
of none,

Of none save only in dreams.

In all the world then surely was but  
one

Song; as in heaven at highest one  
sceptred sun

Regent, on earth here surely without fail  
One only, one imperious nightingale.

Dumb was the field, the woodland mute,  
the lawn

Silent; the hill was tongueless as the  
vale

Even when the last fair waif of cloud  
that felt

Its heart beneath the coloring moonrays  
melt,

At high noon of midnight half with-  
drawn,

Bared all the sudden deep divine moon-  
dawn.

Then, unsaluted by her twin-born tune,  
That latter timeless morning of the  
moon

Rose past its hour of moonrise; clouds  
gave way

To the old reconquering ray,  
But no song answering made it more

than day;

No cry of song by night  
Shot fire into the cloud-constraining  
light.

One only, one Æolian island heard  
Thrill, but through no bird's throat,

In one strange manlike maiden's godlike  
note,

The song of all these as a single bird;  
Till the sea's portal was as funeral gate

For that sole singer in all time's ageless  
date

Singled and signed for so triumphal  
fate,

All nightingales but one in all the world  
All her sweet life were silent; only

then,  
When her life's wing of womanhood was  
furled,

Their cry, this cry of thine was heard  
again,

As of me now, of any born of men.

Through sleepless clear spring nights  
filled full of thee,

Rekindled here, thy ruling song has  
thrilled

The deep dark air and subtle tender sea  
And breathless hearts with one bright  
sound fulfilled.

Or at midnight to me

Swimming, and birds about my happier  
head

Skimming, one smooth soft way by  
water and air,

To these my bright born brethren and to  
me

Hath not the clear wind borne or seemed  
to bear

A song wherein all earth and heaven  
and sea

Were molten in one music made of thee  
To enforce us, O our sister of the shore,

Look once in heart back landward and  
adore?

For songless were we sea-mews, yet had  
we

More joy than all things joyful of thee—  
more,

Haply, than all things happiest; nay,  
save thee,

In thy strong rapture of imperious joy  
Too high for heart of sea-borne bird or  
boy,

What living things were happiest if not  
we?

But knowing not love nor change nor  
wrath nor wrong,

No more we knew of song.

Song, and the secrets of it, and their  
might,

What blessings curse it and what curses  
bless,

I know them since my spirit had first in  
sight,

Clear as thy song's words or the live  
sun's light,

The small dark body's Lesbian loveliness

That held the fire eternal ; eye and ear  
 Were as a god's to see, a god's to hear,  
 Through all his hours of daily and night-  
 ly chime,  
 The sundering of the two-edged spear of  
 time :  
 The spear that pierces even the seven-  
 fold shields  
 Of mightiest Memory, mother of all songs  
 made,  
 And wastes all songs as roseleaves kissed  
 and frayed  
 As here the harvest of the foam-flowered  
 fields ;  
 But thine the spear may waste not that  
 he wields  
 Since first the God whose soul is man's  
 live breath,  
 The sun whose face hath our sun's face  
 for shade,  
 Put all the light of life and love and  
 death  
 Too strong for life, but not for love too  
 strong,  
 Where pain makes peace with pleasure  
 in thy song,  
 And in thine heart, where love and song  
 make strife,  
 Fire everlasting of eternal life. 1880.

ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CAR-  
 LYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT

Two souls diverse out of our human sight  
 Pass, followed one with love and each  
 with wonder :  
 The stormy sophist with his mouth of  
 thunder,  
 Clothed with loud words and mantled in  
 the might  
 Of darkness and magnificence of night ;  
 And one whose eye could smite the night  
 in sunder,  
 Searching if light or no light were there-  
 under,  
 And found in love of loving-kindness  
 light.  
 Duty divine and Thought with eyes of  
 fire  
 Still following Righteousness with deep  
 desire  
 Shone sole and stern before her and  
 above—  
 Sure stars and sole to steer by ; but  
 more sweet  
 Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earth-  
 ly feet,—  
 The light of little children, and their  
 love. April, 1881.

SONG FROM MARY STUART

AND ye maun braid your yellow hair,  
 And busk ye like a bride ;  
 Wi' sevenscore men to bring ye hame,  
 And ae true love beside :  
 Between the birk and the green rowan  
 Fu' blithely shall ye ride.  
 O ye maun braid my yellow hair,  
 But braid it like nae bride ;  
 And I maun gang my ways, mither,  
 Wi' nae true love beside ;  
 Between the kirk and the kirkyard  
 Fu' sadly shall I ride. 1881.

HOPE AND FEAR

BENEATH the shadow of dawn's aerial  
 cope,  
 With eyes enkindled as the sun's own  
 sphere,  
 Hope from the front of youth in god-  
 like cheer  
 Looks Godward, past the shades where  
 blind men grope  
 Round the dark door that prayers nor  
 dreams can ope,  
 And makes for joy the very darkness  
 dear  
 That gives her wide wings play ; nor  
 dreams that fear  
 At noon may rise and pierce the heart of  
 hope.  
 Then, when the soul leaves off to dream  
 and yearn,  
 May truth first purge her eyesight to  
 discern  
 What once being known leaves time no  
 power to appal ;  
 Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not,  
 learn  
 The kind wise word that falls from  
 years that fall—  
 " Hope thou not much, and fear thou  
 not at all." 1882.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Nor if men's tongues and angels' all in  
 one  
 Spake, might the word be said that  
 might speak Thee.  
 Streams, winds, woods, flowers, fields,  
 mountains, yea, the sea,  
 What power is in them all to praise the  
 sun ?  
 His praise is this,—he can be praised of  
 none.



Man, woman, child, praise God for him ;  
 but he  
 Exults not to be worshipped, but to be.  
 He is ; and, being, beholds his work well  
 done.  
 All joy, all glory, all sorrow, all strength,  
 all mirth,  
 Are his : without him, day were night  
 on earth.  
 Time knows not his from time's own  
 period.  
 All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes,  
 all lyres,  
 Fall dumb before him ere one string  
 suspires.  
 All stars are angels ; but the sun is God.  
 1882.

## CHILDREN

OF such is the kingdom of heaven.  
 No glory that ever was shed  
 From the crowning star of the seven  
 That crown the north world's head,

No word that ever was spoken  
 Of human or godlike tongue,  
 Gave ever such godlike token  
 Since human harps were strung.

No sign that ever was given  
 To faithful or faithless eyes  
 Showed ever beyond clouds riven  
 So clear a Paradise.

Earth's creeds may be seventy times  
 seven  
 And blood have defiled each creed :  
 If of such be the kingdom of heaven,  
 It must be heaven indeed. 1882.

## A CHILD'S LAUGHTER

All the bells of heaven may ring,  
 All the birds of heaven may sing,  
 All the wells on earth may spring,  
 All the winds on earth may bring  
 All sweet sounds together ;  
 Sweeter far than all things heard,  
 Hand of harper, tone of bird,  
 Sound of woods at sundawn stirr'd,  
 Welling water's winsome word,  
 Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none  
 Hearing ere its chime be done  
 Knows not well the sweetest one  
 Heard of man beneath the sun,  
 Hoped in heaven hereafter ;

Soft and strong and loud and light,  
 Very sound of very light  
 Heard from morning's rosiest height,  
 When the soul of all delight  
 Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome roll'd  
 Never forth such notes, nor told  
 Hours so blithe in tones so bold,  
 As the radiant mouth of gold  
 Here that rings forth heaven.  
 If the golden-crested wren  
 Were a nightingale—why, then  
 Something seen and heard of men  
 Might be half as sweet as when  
 Laughs a child of seven. 1882.

## THE SALT OF THE EARTH

IF childhood were not in the world,  
 But only men and women grown ;  
 No baby-locks in tendrils curled,  
 No baby-blossoms blown ;

Though men were stronger, women  
 fairer,  
 And nearer all delights in reach,  
 And verse and music uttered rarer  
 Tones of more godlike speech ;

Though the utmost life of life's best  
 hours  
 Found, as it cannot now find, words ;  
 Though desert sands were sweet as  
 flowers  
 And flowers could sing like birds,

But children never heard them, never  
 They felt a child's foot leap and run :  
 This were a drearier star than ever  
 Yet looked upon the sun. 1882.

## CHILD AND POET

You send me your love in a letter,  
 I send you my love in a song :  
 Ah child, your gift is the better,  
 Mine does you but wrong.

No fame, were the best less brittle,  
 No praise, were it wide as earth,  
 Is worth so much as a little  
 Child's love may be worth.

We see the children above us  
 As they might angels above :  
 Come back to us, child, if you love us,  
 And bring us your love. 1882.

A CHILD'S FUTURE

WHAT will it please you, my darling,  
hereafter to be?  
Fame upon land will you look for, or  
glory by sea?  
Gallant your life will be always, and all  
of it free.

Free as the wind when the heart of the  
twilight is stirred  
Eastward, and sounds from the springs  
of the sunrise are heard:  
Free—and we know not another as in-  
finite word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may  
compass us round,  
Hate may arise up against us, or hope  
may confound;  
Love may forsake us; yet may not the  
spirit be bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of  
joy  
Still may the soul be, and each to her  
strength as a toy:  
Free in the glance of the man as the  
smile of the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit  
that gives  
Life, and without her is nothing that  
verily lives:  
Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon  
death and forgives.

Brightest and hardiest of roses anear  
and afar  
Glitters the blithe little face of you,  
round as a star:  
Liberty bless you and keep you to be as  
you are.

England and liberty bless you and keep  
you to be  
Worthy the name of their child and the  
sight of their sea:  
Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears  
not, is free. 1882.

ÉTUDE RÉALISTE

I

A BABY'S feet, like sea-shells pink,  
Might tempt, should Heaven see meet,  
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,  
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the  
heat  
They stretch and spread and wink  
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.  
No flower-bells that expand and shrink  
Gleam half so heavenly sweet  
As shine on life's untrodden brink  
A baby's feet.

II

A baby's hands, like rosebuds furl'd,  
Whence yet no leaf expands,  
Ope if you touch, though close upcurl'd  
A baby's hands.

Then, even as warriors grip their brands  
When battle's bolt is hurl'd,  
They close, clench'd hard like tighten-  
ing bands.

No rosebuds yet by dawn impearl'd  
Match, even in loveliest lands,  
The sweetest flowers in all the world—  
A baby's hands.

III

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin,  
Ere lips learn words or sighs,  
Bless all things bright enough to win  
A baby's eyes.

Love, while the sweet thing laughs and  
lies,  
And sleep flows out and in,  
Lies perfect in them Paradise.

Their glance might cast out pain and sin,  
Their speech make dumb the wise,  
By mute glad godhead felt within  
A baby's eyes. 1883.

IN GUERNSEY

(TO THEODORE WATTS)

I

THE heavenly bay, ringed round with  
cliffs and moors,  
Storm-stained ravines, and crags that  
lawns inlay,  
Soothes as with love the rocks whose  
guard secures  
The heavenly bay.

O friend, shall time take even this away,  
This blessing given of beauty that en-  
dures,  
This glory shown us, not to pass but stay?

Though sight be changed for memory,  
 love ensures  
 What memory, changed by love to sight,  
 would say—  
 The word that seals for ever mine and  
 yours,  
 The heavenly bay.

## II

My mother sea, my fofress, what new  
 strand,  
 What new delight of waters, may this be,  
 The fairest found since time's first  
 breezes fanned  
 My mother sea?

Once more I give me body and soul to  
 thee,  
 Who hast my soul for ever: cliff and  
 sand  
 Recede, and heart to heart once more  
 are we.

My heart springs first and plunges, ere  
 my hand  
 Strike out from shore: more close it  
 brings to me,  
 More near and dear than seems my  
 fatherland,  
 My mother sea.

## III

Across and along, as the bay's breadth  
 opens, and o'er us  
 Wild autumn exults in the wind, swift  
 rapture and strong  
 Impels us, and broader the wide waves  
 brighten before us  
 Across and along.

The whole world's heart is uplifted, and  
 knows not wrong;  
 The whole world's life is a chant to the  
 sea-tide's chorus;  
 Are we not as waves of the water, as  
 notes of the song?

Like children unworn of the passions and  
 toils that wore us,  
 We breast for a season the breadth of the  
 seas that throng,  
 Rejoicing as they, to be borne as of old  
 they bore us  
 Across and along. 1883.

## A SINGING LESSON

FAR-FETCHED and dear bought, as the  
 proverb rehearses,

Is good, or was held so, for ladies; but  
 nought  
 In a song can be good if the turn of the  
 verse is  
 Far-fetched and dear bought.

As the turn of a wave should it sound,  
 and the thought  
 Ring smooth, and as light as the spray  
 that disperses  
 Be the gleam of the words for the garb  
 thereof wrought.

Let the soul in it shine through the  
 sound as it pierces  
 Men's hearts with possession of music  
 unsought;  
 For the bounties of song are no jealous  
 god's mercies,  
 Far-fetched and dear bought. 1883.

## THE ROUNDEL

A Roundel is wrought as a ring or a  
 starbright sphere,  
 With craft of delight and with cunning  
 of sound unsought,  
 That the heart of the hearer may smile  
 if to pleasure his ear  
 A roundel is wrought.

Its jewel of music is carven of all or of  
 aught—  
 Love, laughter, or mourning—remem-  
 brance of rapture or fear—  
 That fancy may fashion to hang in the  
 ear of thought.

As a bird's quick song runs round, and  
 the hearts in us hear—  
 Pause answers to pause, and again the  
 same strain caught,  
 So moves the device whence, round as a  
 pearl or tear,  
 A roundel is wrought.

1883.

## A SOLITUDE

SEA beyond sea, sand after sweep of  
 sand,  
 Here ivory smooth, here cloven and  
 ridged with flow  
 Of channelled waters soft as rain or  
 snow,  
 Stretch their lone length at ease beneath  
 the bland  
 Gray gleam of skies whose smile on  
 wave and strand  
 Shines weary like a man's who smiles to  
 know

That now no dream can mock his faith  
 with show,  
 Nor cloud for him seem living sea or  
 land.  
 Is there an end at all of all this waste,  
 These crumbling cliffs defeatured and  
 defaced,  
 These ruinous heights of sea-sapped  
 walls that slide  
 Seaward with all their banks of bleak  
 blown flowers  
 Glad yet of life, ere yet their hope sub-  
 side  
 Beneath the coil of dull dense waves  
 and hours? June, 1884.

### ON A COUNTRY ROAD

ALONG these low pleached lanes, on such  
 a day,  
 So soft a day as this, through shade and  
 sun,  
 With glad grave eyes that scanned the  
 glad wild way  
 And heart still hovering o'er a song  
 begun,  
 And smile that warmed the world with  
 benison,  
 Our father, lord long since of lordly  
 rhyme,  
 Long since hath haply ridden, when the  
 lime  
 Bloomed broad above him, flowering  
 where he came.  
 Because thy passage once made warm  
 this clime,  
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
 name.

Each year that England clothes herself  
 with May,  
 She takes thy likeness on her. Time  
 hath spun  
 Fresh raiment all in vain and strange  
 array  
 For earth and man's new spirit, fain to  
 shun  
 Things past for dreams of better to be  
 won,  
 Through many a century since thy fun-  
 eral chime  
 Rang, and men deemed it death's most  
 direful crime  
 To have spared not thee for very love or  
 shame;  
 And yet, while mists round last year's  
 memories climb,  
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
 name.

Each turn of the old wild road whereon  
 we stray,  
 Meseems, might bring us face to face  
 with one  
 Whom seeing we could not but give  
 thanks, and pray  
 For England's love our father and her  
 son  
 To speak with us as once in days long  
 done  
 With all men, sage and churl and monk  
 and mime,  
 Who knew not as we know the soul sub-  
 lime  
 That sang for song's love more than  
 lust of fame.  
 Yet, though this be not, yet, in happy  
 time,  
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
 name.

Friend, even as bees about the flower-  
 ing thyme,  
 Years crowd on years, till hoar decay  
 begrime  
 Names once beloved; but seeing the  
 sun the same,  
 As birds of autumn fain to praise the  
 prime,  
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
 name. June, 1884.

### THE SEABOARD

THE sea is at ebb, and the sound of her  
 utmost word  
 Is soft as the least wave's lapse in a still  
 small reach.  
 From bay unto bay, on quest of a goal  
 deferred,  
 From headland ever to headland and  
 breach to breach  
 Where earth gives ear to the message  
 that all days preach  
 With changes of gladness and sadness  
 that cheer and chide,  
 The lone way lures me along by a chance  
 untried  
 That haply, if hope dissolve not and  
 faith be whole,  
 Not all for nought shall I seek, with a  
 dream for guide,  
 The goal that is not, and ever again the  
 goal.

The trackless ways are untravelled of  
 sail or bird;  
 The hoar wave hardly recedes from the  
 soundless beach.

The silence of instant noon goes nigh to  
be heard,  
The viewless void to be visible : all and  
each,  
A closure of calm no clamor of storm  
can breach  
Concludes and confines and absorbs them  
on either side,  
All forces of light and of life and the  
live world's pride.  
Sands hardly ruffled of ripples that  
hardly roll  
Seem ever to show as in reach of a swift  
brief stride [goal.  
The goal that is not, and ever again the

The waves are a joy to the seamew, the  
meads to the herd,  
And a joy to the heart is a goal that it  
may not reach.  
No sense that for ever the limits of sense  
engird,  
No hearing or sight that is vassal to  
form or speech,  
Learns ever the secret that shadow and  
silence teach,  
Hears ever the notes that or ever they  
swell subside,  
Sees ever the light that lights not the  
loud world's tide,  
Clasps ever the cause of the lifelong  
scheme's control  
Wherethrough we pursue, till the waters  
of life be dried, [goal.  
The goal that is not, and ever again the

Friend, what have we sought or seek we,  
whate'er betide,  
Though the seaboard shift its mark from  
afar descried,  
But aims whence ever anew shall arise  
the soul?  
Love, thought, song, life, but show for  
a glimpse and hide  
The goal that is not, and ever again the  
goal. 1884.

#### THE CLIFFSIDE PATH

SEAWARD goes the sun, and homeward  
by the down  
We, before the night upon his grave be  
sealed.  
Low behind us lies the bright steep  
murmuring town,  
High before us heaves the steep rough  
silent field.  
Breach by ghastlier breach, the cliffs  
collapsing yield :

Half the path is broken, half the banks  
divide ;  
Flawed and crumbled, riven and rent,  
they cleave and slide  
Toward the ridged and wrinkled waste  
of girdling sand  
Deep beneath, whose furrows tell how  
far and wide  
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand.

Star by star on the unsunned waters  
twining down,  
Golden spear-points glance against a  
silver shield.  
Over banks and bents, across the head-  
land's crown,  
As by pulse of gradual plumes through  
twilight wheeled,  
Soft as sleep, the waking wind awakes  
the weald.  
Moor and copse and fallow, near or far  
descried,  
Feel the mild wings move, and gladden  
where they glide :  
Silence uttering love that all things un-  
derstand,  
Bids the quiet fields forget that hard  
beside  
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand.

Yet may sight, ere all the hoar soft  
shade grow brown,  
Hardly reckon half the rifts and rents  
unhealed  
Where the scarred cliffs downward  
sundering drive and drown,  
Hewn as if with stroke of swords in  
tempest steeled,  
Wielded as the night's will and the  
wind's may wield.  
Crowned and zoned in vain with flowers  
of autumn-tide,  
Life and love seek harborage on the land-  
ward side ;  
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand.

Friend, though man be less than these,  
for all his pride,  
Yet, for all his weakness, shall not hope  
abide ?  
Wind and change can wreck but life and  
waste but land :  
Truth and trust are sure, though here  
till all subside  
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand. 1884.

## IN THE WATER

**THE** sea is awake, and the sound of the song of the joy of her waking is rolled From afar to the star that recedes, from anear to the wastes of the wild wide shore.

Her call is a trumpet compelling us homeward: if dawn in her east be acold,

From the sea shall we crave not her grace to rekindle the life that it kindled before,

Her breath to requicken, her bosom to rock us, her kisses to bless as of yore? For the wind, with his wings half open, at pause in the sky, neither fettered nor free,

Leans waveward and flutters the ripple to laughter: and fain would the twain of us be

Where lightly the wave yearns forward from under the curve of the deep dawn's dome,

And, full of the morning and fired with the pride of the glory thereof and the glee,

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Life holds not an hour that is better to live in: the past is a tale that is told, The future a sun-flecked shadow, alive and asleep, with a blessing in store.

As we give us again to the waters, the rapture of limbs that the waters enfold

Is less than the rapture of spirit whereby, though the burden it quits were sore, Our souls and the bodies they wield at their will are absorbed in the life they adore—

In the life that endures no burden, and bows not the forehead, and bends not the knee—

In the life everlasting of earth and of heaven, in the laws that atone and agree,

In the measureless music of things, in the fervor of forces that rest or that roam, That cross and return and reissue, as I after you and as you after me

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

For, albeit he were less than the least of them, haply the heart of a man may be bold

To rejoice in the word of the sea, as a mother's that saith to the son she bore, "Child, was not the life in thee mine, and my spirit the breath in thy lips from of old?"

Have I let not thy weakness exult in my strength, and thy foolishness learn of my lore?

Have I helped not or healed not thine anguish, or made not the might of thy gladness more?"

And surely his heart should answer, "The light of the love of my life is in thee."

She is fairer than earth, and the sun is not fairer, the wind is not blither than she: From my youth hath she shown me the joy of her bays that I crossed, of her cliffs that I clomb,

Till now that the twain of us here, in desire of the dawn and in trust of the sea,

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Friend, earth is a harbor of refuge for winter, a covert whereunder to flee

When day is the vassal of night, and the strength of the hosts of her mightier than he;

But here is the presence adored of me, here my desire is at rest and at home.

There are cliffs to be climbed upon land, there are ways to be trodden and ridden: but we

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam. 1894.

## THE SUNBOWS

**SPRAY** of song that springs in April, light of love that laughs through May.

Live and die and live for ever: nought of all things far less fair

Keeps a surer life than these that seem to pass like fire away.

In the souls they live which are but all the brighter that they were;

In the hearts that kindle, thinking what delight of old was there.

Wind that shapes and lifts and shifts them bids perpetual memory play

Over dreams and in and out of deeds and thoughts which seem to wear

Light that leaps and runs and revels through the springing flames of spray.

Dawn is wild upon the waters where we drink of dawn to-day:

Wide, from wave to wave rekindling in  
rebound through radiant air,  
Flash the fires unwoven and woven again  
of wind that works in play,  
Working wonders more than heart may  
note or sight may well nigh dare,  
Wefts of rarer light than colors rain  
from heaven, though this be rare.  
Arch on arch unbuilt in building, reared  
and ruined ray by ray,  
Breaks and brightens, laughs and less-  
ens, even till eyes may hardly bear  
Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.

Year on year sheds light and music  
rolled and flashed from bay to bay  
Round the summer capes of time and  
winter headlands keen and bare  
Whence the soul keeps watch, and bids  
her vassal memory watch and pray,  
If perchance the dawn may quicken, or  
perchance the midnight spare.  
Silence quells not music, darkness takes  
not sunlight in her snare;  
Shall not joys endure that perish? Yea,  
saith dawn, though night say nay:  
Life on life goes out, but very life en-  
kindles everywhere  
Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.

Friend, were life no more than this is,  
well would yet the living fare.  
All aflower and all afire and all flung  
heavenward, who shall say  
Such a flash of life were worthless? This  
is worth a world of care—  
Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.  
1884.

#### ON THE VERGE

HERE begins the sea that ends not till  
the world's end. Where we stand,  
Could we know the next high sea-mark  
set beyond these waves that gleam,  
We should know what never man hath  
known, nor eye of man hath scanned.  
Nought beyond these coiling clouds that  
melt like fume of shrines that steam  
Breaks or stays the strength of waters  
till they pass our bounds of dream.  
Where the waste Land's End leans west-  
ward, all the seas it watches roll  
Find their border fixed beyond them,  
and a worldwide shore's control:  
These whereby we stand, no shore be-  
yond us limits: these are free.

Gazing hence, we see the water that  
grows iron round the Pole,  
From the shore that hath no shore be-  
yond it set in all the sea.

Sail on sail along the sea-line fades and  
flashes: here on land  
Flash and fade the wheeling wings on  
wings of mews that plunge and scream.  
Hour on hour along the line of life and  
time's evasive strand  
Shines and darkens, wanes and waxes,  
slays and dies: and scarce they seem  
More than notes that thronged and  
trembled in the brief noon's breath  
and beam.

Some with crying and wailing, some  
with notes like sound of bells that toll,  
Some with sighing and laughing, some  
with words that blessed and made us  
whole,  
Passed, and left us, and we know not  
what they were, nor what were we.  
Would we know, being mortal? Never  
breath of answering whisper stole  
From the shore that hath no shore be-  
yond it set in all the sea.

Shadows, would we question darkness?  
Ere our eyes and brows be fanned  
Round with airs of twilight, washed  
with dews from sleep's eternal stream,  
Would we know sleep's guarded secret?  
Ere the fire consume the brand,  
Would it know if yet its ashes may re-  
quicken? yet we deem  
Surely man may know, or ever night  
unyoke her starry team,  
What the dawn shall be, or if the dawn  
shall be not: yea, the scroll  
Would we read of sleep's dark scripture,  
pledge of peace or doom of dole.  
Ah, but here man's heart leaps, yearning  
toward the gloom with venturous glee,  
Though his pilot eye behold nor bay nor  
harbor, rock nor shoal,  
From the shore that hath no shore be-  
yond it set in all the sea.

Friend, who knows if death indeed have  
life or life have death for goal?  
Day nor night can tell us, nor may seas  
declare nor skies unroll  
What has been from everlasting, or if  
aught shall alway be.  
Silence answering only strikes response  
reverberate on the soul  
From the shore that hath no shore  
beyond it set in all the sea. 1884.

ON THE MONUMENT ERECTED  
TO MAZZINI AT GENOA

ITALIA, mother of the souls of men,  
Mother divine  
Of all that serv'd thee best with sword  
or pen,  
All sons of thine,

Thou knowest that here the likeness of  
the best  
Before thee stands:  
The head most high, the heart found  
faithfullest,  
The purest hands.

Above the fume and foam of time that  
flits,  
The soul, we know,  
Now sits on high where Alighieri sits  
With Angelo.

Nor his own heavenly tongue hath heav-  
enly speech  
Enough to say  
What this man was, whose praise no  
thought may reach,  
No words can weigh.

Since man's first mother brought to  
mortal birth  
Her first-born son,  
Such grace befell not ever man on earth  
As crowns this One.

Of God nor man was ever this thing  
said:  
That he could give  
Life back to her who gave him, that his  
dead  
Mother might live.

But this man found his mother dead and  
slain,  
With fast-seal'd eyes,  
And bade the dead rise up and live again,  
And she did rise:

And all the world was bright with her  
through him:  
But dark with strife,  
Like heaven's own sun that storming  
clouds bedim,  
Was all his life.

Life and the clouds are vanish'd; hate  
and fear  
Have had their span  
Of time to hurt and are not: He is here,  
The sunlike man.

City superb, that hadst Columbus first  
For sovereign son,  
Be prouder that thy breast hath later  
nursed  
This mightier One.

Glory be his for ever, while his land  
Lives and is free,  
As with controlling breath and sove-  
reign hand  
He bade her be.

Earth shows to heaven the names by  
thousands told  
That crown her fame,  
But highest of all that heaven and earth  
behold,  
Mazzini's name. 1884.

THE INTERPRETERS

I

DAYS dawn on us that make amends for  
many  
Sometimes,  
When heaven and earth seem sweeter  
even than any  
Man's rhymes.

Light had not all been quenched in  
France, or quelled  
In Greece,  
Had Homer sung not, or had Hugo held  
His peace.

Had Sappho's self not left her word thus  
long  
For token,  
The sea round Lesbos yet in waves of  
song  
Had spoken.

II

And yet these days of subtler air and  
finer  
Delight,  
When lovelier looks the darkness, and  
diviner  
The light—

The gift they give of all these golden  
hours,  
Whose urn  
Pours forth reverberate rays or shadow-  
ing showers  
In turn—

Clouds, beams, and winds that make the  
live day's track  
Seem living—



What were they did no spirit give them  
back

Thanksgiving?

III

Dead air, dead fire, dead shapes and  
shadows, telling

Time nought;

Man gives them sense and soul by song,  
and dwelling

In thought.

In human thought their being endures,  
their power

Abides:

Else were their life a thing that each  
light hour

Derides.

The years live, work, sigh, smile, and  
die, with all

They cherish;

The soul endures, though dreams that  
fed it fall

And perish.

IV

In human thought have all things habi-  
tation:

Our days

Laugh, lower, and lighten past, and find  
no station

That stays.

But thought and faith are mightier  
things than time

Can wrong,

Made splendid once with speech, or made  
sublime

By song.

Remembrance, though the tide of change  
that rolls

Wax hoary.

Gives earth and heaven, for song's sake  
and the soul's,

Their glory. 1885.

A WORD WITH THE WIND

LORD of days and nights that hear thy  
word of wintry warning,

Wind whose feet are set on ways that  
none may tread,

Change the nest wherein thy wings are  
fledged for flight by morning,

Change the harbor whence at dawn  
thy sails are spread.

Not the dawn, ere yet the imprisoning  
night has half released her,

More desires the sun's full face of  
cheer, than we.

Well as yet we love the strength of the  
iron-tongued north-easter,

Yearn for wind to meet us as we front  
the sea.

All thy ways are good, O wind, and all  
the world should fester,

Were thy fourfold godhead quenched,  
or stilled thy strife:

Yet the waves and we desire too long  
the deep south-wester,

Whence the waters quicken shore-  
ward, clothed with life.

Yet the field not made for plunging  
save of keels nor harrowing

Save of storm-winds lies unbrightened  
by thy breath:

Banded broad with ruddy sapphire  
glow the sea-banks narrowing

Westward, while the sea gleams chill  
and still as death.

Sharp and strange from inland sounds  
thy bitter note of battle,

Blown between grim skies and waters  
sullen-souled,

Till the baffled seas bear back, rocks  
roar and shingles rattle,

Vexed and angered and anhungered  
and acold.

Change thy note, and give the waves  
their will, and all the measure,

Full and perfect, of the music of their  
might,

Let it fill the bays with thunderous  
notes of pleasure,

Shake the shores with passion, sound  
at once and smite.

Sweet are even the mild low notes of  
wind and sea, but sweeter

Sounds the song whose choral wrath  
of raging rhyme

Bids the shelving shoals keep tune with  
storm's imperious metre,

Bids the rocks and reefs respond in  
rapturous chime.

Sweet the lisp and lulling whisper and  
luxurious laughter, [the sun

Soft as love or sleep, of waves wherein  
Dreams, and dreams not of the darkling

hours before nor after,

Winged with cloud whose wrath shall  
bid love's day be done.

Yet shall darkness bring the awakening  
sea a lordlier lover,

Clothed with strength more amorous  
and more strenuous will,

Whence her heart of hearts shall kindle  
and her soul recover  
Sense of love too keen to lie for love's  
sake still.  
Let thy strong south-western music  
sound, and bid the billows  
Brighten, proud and glad to feel thy  
scourge and kiss  
Sting and soothe and sway them, bowed  
as aspens bend or willows,  
Yet resurgent still in breathless rage  
of bliss.  
All to-day the slow sleek ripples hardly  
bear up shore-ward,  
Charged with sighs more light than  
laughter, faint and fair,  
Like a woodland lake's weak wavelets  
lightly lingering forward, [air.  
Soft and listless as the slumber-stricken  
Be the sunshine bared or veiled, the sky  
superb or shrouded,  
Still the waters, lax and languid,  
chafed and foiled,  
Keen and thwarted, pale and patient,  
clothed with fire or clouded,  
Vex their heart in vain, or sleep like  
serpents coiled.  
Thee they look for, blind and baffled,  
wan with wrath and weary,  
Blown for ever back by winds that  
rock the bird :  
Winds that seamews breast subdue the  
sea, and bid the dreary  
Waves be weak as hearts made sick  
with hope deferred.  
Let thy clarion sound from westward,  
let the south bear token  
How the glories of thy godhead sound  
and shine :  
Bid the land rejoice to see the land-  
wind's broad wings broken.  
Bid the sea take comfort, bid the  
world be thine.  
Half the world abhors thee beating back  
the sea, and blackening  
Heaven with fierce and woful change  
of fluctuant form :  
All the world acclaims thee shifting sail  
again, and slackening  
Cloud by cloud the close-reefed cordage  
of the storm.  
Sweeter fields and brighter woods and  
lordlier hills than waken  
Here at sunrise never hailed the sun  
and thee :  
Turn thee then, and give them comfort,  
shed like rain and shaken  
Far as foam that laughs and leaps  
along the sea. 1889.

IN TIME OF MOURNING

"RETURN," we dare not as we fain  
Would cry from hearts that yearn :  
Love dares not bid our dead again  
Return.

O hearts that strain and burn  
As fires fast fettered burn and strain !  
Bow down, lie still, and learn.

The heart that healed all hearts of pain  
No funeral rites inurn :  
Its echoes, while the stars remain,  
Return. *May, 1885. 1889.*

A SEQUENCE OF SONNETS ON THE  
DEATH OF ROBERT BROWNING

THE clearest eyes in all the world they  
read  
With sense more keen and spirit of sight  
more true  
Than burns and thrills in sunrise, when  
the dew  
Flames, and absorbs the glory round it  
shed,  
As they the light of ages quick and dead,  
Closed now, forsake us : yet the shaft  
that slew  
Can slay not one of all the works we  
knew.  
Nor death discrown that many-laurelled  
head.  
The works of words whose life seems  
lightning wrought,  
And moulded of unconquerable thought,  
And quickened with imperishable flame,  
Stand fast and shine and smile, assured  
that nought  
May fade of all their myriad-moulded  
fame,  
Nor England's memory clasp not Brown-  
ing's name.

Death, what hast thou to do with one  
for whom  
Time is not lord, but servant ? What  
least part  
Of all the fire that fed his living heart,  
Of all the light more keen than sun-  
dawn's bloom  
That lit and led his spirit, strong as doom  
And bright as hope, can aught thy  
breath may dart  
Quench ? Nay, thou knowest he knew  
thee what thou art.  
A shadow born of terror's barren womb,

That brings not forth save shadows.  
 What art thou,  
 To dream, albeit thou breathe upon his  
 brow,  
 That power on him is given thee,—that  
 thy breath  
 Can make him less than love acclaims  
 him now,  
 And hears all time sound back the word  
 it saith?  
 What part hast thou then in his glory,  
 Death?

But he—to him, who knows what gift is  
 thine,  
 Death? Hardly may we think or hope  
 when we  
 Pass likewise thither where to-night is  
 he,  
 Beyond the irremeable outer seas that  
 shine  
 And darken round such dreams as half  
 divine  
 Some sunlit harbor in that starless sea  
 Where gleams no ship to windward or  
 to lee,  
 To read with him the secret of thy shrine.  
 There too, as here, may song, delight,  
 and love,  
 The nightingale, the sea-bird, and the  
 dove,  
 Fulfil with joy the splendor of the sky  
 Till all beneath wax bright as all above:  
 But none of all that search the heavens,  
 and try  
 The sun, may match the sovereign  
 eagle's eye.

Among the wondrous ways of men and  
 time  
 He went as one that ever found and  
 sought  
 And bore in hand the lamplike spirit  
 of thought  
 To illumine with instance of its fire sub-  
 lime  
 The dusk of many a cloudlike age and  
 clime.  
 No spirit in shape of light and darkness  
 wrought.  
 No faith, no fear, no dream, no rapture,  
 nought  
 That blooms in wisdom, nought that  
 burns in crime,  
 No virtue girt and armed and helmed  
 with light,  
 No love more lovely than the snows are  
 white,

No serpent sleeping in some dead soul's  
 tomb,  
 No song-bird singing from some live  
 soul's height,  
 But he might hear, interpret, or illumine  
 With sense invasive as the dawn of  
 doom.

What secret thing of splendor or of  
 shade  
 Surmised in all those wandering ways  
 wherein  
 Man, led of love and life and death and  
 sin,  
 Strays, climbs, or cowers, allured, ab-  
 sorbed, afraid,  
 Might not the strong and sunlike sense  
 invade  
 Of that full soul that had for aim to win  
 Light, silent over time's dark toil and  
 din,  
 Life, at whose touch death fades as dead  
 things fade?  
 O spirit of man, what mystery moves in  
 thee  
 That he might know not of in spirit, and  
 see  
 The heart within the heart that seems  
 to strive,  
 The life within the life that seems to be.  
 And hear through all thy storms that  
 whirl and drive,  
 The living sound of all men's souls alive!

He held no dream worth waking: so he  
 said,  
 He who stands now on death's tri-  
 umphal steep,  
 Awakened out of life wherein we sleep  
 And dream of what he knows and sees,  
 being dead.  
 But never death for him was darker or  
 dread:  
 "Look forth" he bade the soul, and  
 fear not. Weep,  
 All ye that trust not in his truth, and  
 keep  
 Vain memory's vision of a vanished head  
 As all that lives of all that once was he  
 Save that which lightens from his word:  
 but we,  
 Who, seeing the sunset-colored waters  
 roll,  
 Yet know the sun subdued not of the  
 sea,  
 Nor weep nor doubt that still the spirit  
 is whole,  
 And life and death but shadows of the  
 soul.

January, 1890.

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 Kissing her hair I sat against her feet, Sa  
     876  
 Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf, R 776  
 Know ye the land where the cypress and  
     myrtle, B 172  
  
 Lady Alice, Lady Louise, M 835  
 Late, late, so late! and dark the night and  
     chill, T 527  
 Lately our songsters loiter'd in green lanes,  
     L 457  
 Le navire, Sw 871  
 Let no man ask thee of anything, R 810  
 Let's contend no more, Love, RB 617  
 Let the world's sharpness, like a clasp-  
     ing knife EBB 560  
 Let us begin and carry up this corpse, RB  
     635  
 Let your hands meet, Sw 869  
 Life may change, but it may fly not, Sh 366  
 Life of life! the lips enkindle, Sh 320  
 Light flows our war of mocking words, and  
     yet, Ar 723  
 Light of our fathers' eyes, and, in our own,  
     Sw 891

- Like labor-laden moonclouds faint to flee, R 799  
 Like the ghost of a dear friend dead, Sh 348  
 Live thy life, T 553  
 Lo, from our loitering ship a new land at last to be seen, M 863  
 Lo, here is God, and there is God! Cl 689  
 Long fed on boundless hopes, O race of man, Ar 762  
 Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been, R 807  
 Lord of days and nights, that hear thy word of wintry warning, Sw 908  
 Lord of the Celtic dells, L 438  
 Love is and was my lord and king, T 513  
 Love is enough: ho ye who seek saving, M 859  
 Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy of song, Sw 895  
 Love thou thy land, with love far-brought, T 480  
 Love to his singer held a glistening leaf, R 801  
 Low was our pretty cot, our tallest rose, C 60  
 Lo, when we wade the tangled wood, M 864  
 Lo! where the four mimosas blend their shade, L 432  
 Maid of Athens, ere we part, B 170  
 Man is blind because of sin, Ar 764  
 Many a green isle needs must be, Sh 293  
 Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a vanish'd face, T 550  
 Many love music but for music's sake, L 455  
 March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale, Sc 165  
 Master of the murmuring courts, R 786  
 Mild is the parting year, and sweet, L 431  
 Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour, W 33  
 Moderate tasks and moderate leisure, Ar 714  
 Monarch of gods and demons and all spirits, Sh 299  
 Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains, B 215  
 Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes, W 61  
 Mother, I cannot mind my wheel, L 440  
 Much have I travelled in the realms of gold, K 373  
 Music, when soft voices die, Sh 358  
 My boat is on the shore, B 234  
 My briar that smelledst sweet, L 432  
 My coursers are fed with the lightning, Sh 319  
 My father was a scholar and knew Greek, RB 684  
 My first thought was, he lied in every word, RB 641  
 My future will not copy fair my past, EBB 564  
 My good blade carves the casques of men, T 493  
 My hair is gray but not with years, B 206  
 My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains, K 408  
 My heart leaps up when I behold, W 26  
 My hopes retire, my wishes as before, L 443  
 My letters! all dead paper, mute and white, EBB 561  
 My love has talk'd with rocks and trees, T 509  
 My love, this is the bitterest, that thou, RB 626  
 My own Beloved, who hast lifted me, EBB 560  
 My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes, EBB 558  
 My sister! my sweet sister! if a name, B 210  
 My soul is an enchanted boat, Sh 321  
 My spirit is too weak — mortality, K 386  
 Nay, but you, who do not love her, RB 605  
 Nay traveller! rest. This lonely yew tree stands, W 4  
 Never the time and the place, RB 681  
 Nobly, nobly, Cape Saint Vincent to the Northwest died away, RB 605  
 No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not Christian! canst not, Cl 692  
 Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame, Sh 358  
 No more — no more — Oh! never more on me, B 242  
 Now Morning from her orient chamber came, K 372  
 No, my own Love of other years! L 441  
 Non ego hoc ferrem calida juventa, B 242  
 No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist, K 409  
 Not as with sundering of the earth, Sw 869  
 Not by one measure may'st thou mete our love, R 798  
 Nothing so difficult as a beginning, B 253  
 No! those days are gone away, K 388  
 Not if men's tongues and angels' all in one, Sw 899  
 Not I myself know all my love for thee, R 798  
 Not that the earth is changing, O my God, R 778  
 Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut, T 503  
 Now fades the last long streak of snow, T 511  
 Nuns fret not at their convents' narrow room, W 48  
 O bitter sea, tumultuous sea, M 839  
 O blithe new-comer! I have heard, W 42  
 O Brignall banks are wild and fair, Sc 161  
 O death that maketh life so sweet, M 840  
 O diviner air, T 549  
 Of Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told, R 805  
 Of heaven or hell I have no power to sing, M 842  
 Of late, in one of those most weary hours, C 102  
 Of old sat Freedom on the heights, T 479  
 O follow, follow, Sh 314  
 O Friend! I know not which way I must turn, W 32  
 Of such is the kingdom of heaven, Sw 900  
 Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray, W 18

- O Goddess! hear these tuneless numbers,  
wrung, K 406
- O good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,  
RB 657
- Oh Galuppi, Baldassaro, this is very sad to  
find, RB 621
- O happy seafarers are ye, M 840
- O heart of hearts, the chalice of love's fire,  
Sw 888
- Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy, W 46
- Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom, B 186
- Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story,  
B 271
- Oh! there are spirits of the air, Sh 275
- Oh, to be in England, RB 605
- Oh yes! they love through all this world of  
ours, EBB 563
- Oh! young Lochinvar is come out of the  
west, Sc 141
- O June, O June, that we desired so, M 854
- "Old things need not be therefore true," Cl  
700
- O let me love my love unto myself alone, Cl 704
- O, let the solid ground, T 519
- O living will that shalt endure, T 513
- O lord of all compassionate control, R 794
- O lovers' eyes are sharp to see, Sc 113
- O lyric Love, half angel and half bird, RB  
668
- O muse that swayest the sad northern song,  
M 864
- On a battle-trumpet's blast, Sh 310
- On a poet's lips I slept, Sh 310
- Once did she hold the glorious earth in fee,  
W 31
- Once in a golden hour, T 539
- Once more the changed year's turning wheel  
returns, R 805
- Once more upon the waters! yet once more,  
B 189
- One day, it thundered and lightened, RB 680
- One flame-winged brought a white-winged  
harp-player, R 794
- On either side the river lie, T 462
- One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee, Cl  
708
- One morn before me were three figures seen,  
K 405
- One word is too often profaned, Sh 368
- One writes that "other friends remain," T  
500
- One year ago my path was green, L 441
- O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies, T  
536
- On the brink of the night and the morning,  
Sh 320
- On the sea and at the Hague, sixteen hun-  
dred ninety-two, RB 669
- On the smooth brow and clustering hair, L  
443
- On the wide level of a mountain's head, C 70
- On this sweet bank your head thrice sweet  
and dear, R 795
- O only source of all our light and life, Cl 698
- O pensive, tender maid, downcast and shy,  
M 854
- O Rome! my country! city of the soul, B 236
- O set us down together in some place, M 850
- Or shall I say, vain word, false thought, Cl  
694
- O ship, ship, ship, Cl 702
- O sleep, it is a gentle thing, C 77
- O soft embalmer of the still midnight, K 423
- O solitude! if I must with thee dwell, K 372
- O sorrow, K 386
- O sorrow, cruel fellowship, T 500
- O sovereign power of love! O grief! O balm!  
K 385
- O stream descending to the sea, Cl 702
- O swallow, swallow, flying, flying south, T  
498
- O that I now, I too were, Sw 868
- O that 'twere possible, T 523
- Others abide our question. Thou art free, At  
708
- O thou that after toil and storm, T 504
- O thou that sendest out the man, T 542
- O thou who at Love's hour ecstatically, R  
793
- O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought,  
W 33
- O thou whose image on the shrine, Cl 669
- O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang,  
K 382
- O thou, wild fancy, check thy wing! No  
more, C 66
- Our gaieties, our luxuries, Cl 695
- Our hid vessels in their pitchy round, L  
427
- Our spoil is won, Sh 331
- Out of my way! Off! or my sword may strike  
thee, L 452
- Overhead the tree-tops meet, RB 591
- Over the great windy waters, and over the  
clear-crested summits, Cl 691
- Over the sea our galleys went, RB 568
- O, well for him whose will is strong, T 524
- O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, K 422
- O wild west wind, thou breath of autumn's  
being, Sh 297
- O woman! in our hours of ease, Sc 156
- O world! O life! O time! Sh 358
- O ye, all ye that walk in Willowwood, R 800
- O yet we trust that somehow good, T 505
- O young mariner, T 551
- Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies, W 27
- Pardon, oh pardon, that my soul should  
make, EBB 563
- Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives, L 431
- Peace, come away: the song of woe, T 506
- Peace in her chamber, wheresoe'er, R 727
- Pibroch of Donuil Dhu, Sc 163
- Pleasures newly found are sweet, W 27
- Pleasure! why thus desert the heart, L 431
- Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know, Sh  
603
- Pray but one prayer for me 'twixt thy  
closed lips, M 827
- Proud Maisie is in the wood, Sc 164
- Proud word you never spoke, but you will  
speak, L 443

- Push hard across the sand, Sw 866  
Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane, Cl 705
- Queen Guinevere had fled the court, and sat,  
T 525  
Quick, painter, quick, the moment seize, Cl  
703  
Quoth a young Salducee, RB 657
- Rain, rain and sun! a rainbow in the sky! T  
540  
Raised are the dripping oars, Ar 719  
Rarely, rarely comest thou, Sh 347  
Remain, ah not in youth alone, L 442  
"Return" we dare not as we fain, Sw 909  
Revered, beloved — O you that hold, T 513  
Rhaicos was born amid the hills wherefrom,  
L 446  
Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky, T 510  
Rivulet crossing my ground, T 521  
Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean —  
roll, B 239  
Roman Virgil, thou that singest Ilion's lofty  
temples robed in fire, T 550  
Rome disappoints me still; but I shrink and  
adapt myself to it, Cl 692  
Rome is fallen, I hear, the gallant Medici  
taken, Cl 693  
Room after room, RB 630  
Rough wind, that moanest loud, Sh 369  
Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,  
RB 605  
Round us the wild creatures, RB 681  
Rousseau — Voltaire — our Gibbon — and De  
Stæhl, B 214  
Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione  
row! T 550
- Said Abner "At last thou art come! Ere I  
tell, ere thou speak, RB 611  
St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!  
K 398  
Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate, B 258  
Saith man to man, We've heard and known,  
M 860  
Savage, I was sitting in my house, late, lone:  
RB 671  
Say not the struggle nought availeth, Cl 695  
Say over again and yet once over again, EBB  
549  
Say what blinds us, that we claim the glory,  
Ar 714  
Scorn not the sonnet; critic, you have frowned,  
W 58  
Sea beyond sea, sand after sweep of sand,  
Sw 902  
Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
K 409  
Seaward goes the sun, and homeward by the  
down, Sw 904  
See, as the prettiest grave will do in time,  
RB 605  
See what a lovely shell, T 522  
Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again, B  
191  
Send but a song oversea for us, Sw 886
- Set where the upper streams of Simois flow,  
Ar 765  
Shall I sonnet-sing you about myself? RB  
672  
Shame upon you, Robin, T 543  
She dwelt among the untrodden ways, W 14  
She fell asleep on Christmas Eve, R 774  
She knew it not — most perfect pain, R 779  
She loves him; for her infinite soul is love,  
R 801  
She should never have looked at me, RB  
594  
She walks in beauty, like the night, B 186  
She was a Phantom of delight, W 42  
Sing me a hero! Quench my thirst, RB  
679  
So all day long the noise of battle roll'd, T  
481  
"So careful of the type?" but no, T 505  
So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive, W 62  
So ends the winning of the Golden Fleece, M  
842  
So far as our story approaches the end, RB  
633  
So go forth to the world, to the good report  
and the evil, Cl 693  
So in the sinful streets, abstracted and alone,  
Cl 697  
So, I shall see her in just three days, RB 631  
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er, Sc 159  
Some future day when what is now is not,  
Cl 701  
Some ladies love the jewels in Love's zone,  
R 794  
Sometimes thou seem'st not as thyself alone,  
R 797  
So now my summer task is ended, Mary,  
Sh 291  
Soon, O Ianthé! life is o'er, L 442  
So sang he: and as meeting rose and rose,  
R 800  
"So say the foolish!" Say the foolish so,  
love, RB 683  
So then, I feel not deeply! if I did, L 455  
Souls of poets dead and gone, K 390  
Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife, Sc  
163  
So we'll go no more a-roving, B 271  
Spray of song that springs in April, light of  
love that laughs through May, Sw 905  
Spring am I, too soft of heart, M 857  
Stand close around, ye Stygian set, L 437  
Standing aloof in giant ignorance, K 389  
Stand still, true poet that you are, RB 632  
Stern daughter of the voice of God, W 44  
Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times, B 270  
Strange fits of passion have I known, W 14  
Strew on her roses, roses, Ar 727  
Strong son of God, immortal Love, T 499  
Such, British Public, ye who like me not, RB  
668  
Such a starved bank of roses, RB 677  
Summer is coming, summer is coming, T 558  
Sunset and evening star, T 553  
Surprised by joy — impatient as the wind,  
W 55



- Sweet and low, sweet and low, T 498  
 Sweet after showers, ambrosial air, T 508  
 Sweet dimness of her loosened hair's down-fall, R 797  
 Sweet Highland girl, a very shower, W 37  
 Sweet is true love, tho' given in vain, T 525  
 Sweet spirit, sister of that orphan one, Sh 348  
 Sweet stream-fed glen, why say "farewell" to thee, R 806  
 Sweet twining hedge flowers wind-stirred in no wise, R 795  
 Swiftly walk o'er the western wave, Sh 357  
 Take these flowers, which purple waving, Sc 108  
 Tanagra! think not I forget, L 436  
 Tax not the royal saint with vain expense, W 57  
 Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean, T 497  
 Tears of the widower, when he sees, T 501  
 Tell me, thou star, whose wings of light, Sh 348  
 That second time they hunted me, RB 606  
 That's my last Duchess painted on the wall, RB 595  
 That son of Italy who tried to blow, Ar 761  
 That which we dare invoke to bless, T 512  
 The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold, B 187  
 The awful shadow of some unseen Power, Sh 287  
 The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day, Sc 108  
 The bee with his comb, RB 591  
 The blessed damozel leaned out, R 774  
 The castled crag of Drachenfels, B 196  
 The chrysolites and rubies Bacchus brings, L 455  
 The churl in spirit, up or down, T 511  
 The clearest eyes in all the world they read, Sw 909  
 The cock is crowing, W 26  
 The Danube to the Severn gave, T 502  
 The day is dark and the night, R 808  
 The day returns, my natal day, L 443  
 The evening comes, the fields are still, Ar 764  
 The everlasting universe of things, Sh 288  
 The face of all the world is changed, I think, EBB 55  
 The fancy I had today, RB 671  
 The first time that the sun rose on thine oath, EBB 562  
 The flower that smiles today, Sh 358  
 The fountains mingle with the river, Sh 299  
 The frost performs its secret ministry, C 90  
 The gallant youth, who may have gained, W 59  
 The gods held talk together, group'd in knots, Ar 745  
 The gray sea, and the long black land, RB 605  
 The heavenly bay, ringed round with cliffs and moors, Sw 901  
 The hour which might have been yet might not be, R 800  
 The human spirits saw I on a day, Cl 690  
 The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece, B 249  
 The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness, Sh 334  
 The lamp must be replenish'd, but even then, B 214  
 The lost days of my life until today, R 806  
 The moth's kiss first, RB 596  
 The moon is up, and yet it is not night, B 235  
 The Niobe of nations, there she stands, B 236  
 The odor from the flower is gone, Sh 293  
 The out-spread world to span, Ar 715  
 The pale stars are gone, Sh 329  
 The path thro' which that lovely twain, Sh 315  
 The poet in a golden clime was born, T 461  
 The poetry of earth is never dead, K 374  
 The poets pour us wine, RB 674  
 The rain had fallen, the Poet arose, T 497  
 The rain set early in tonight, RB 569  
 There be none of Beauty's daughters, B 189  
 There came an image in life's retinue, R 799  
 There is a flower I wish to wear, L 457  
 There is a yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale, W 36  
 There is delight in singing, tho' none hear, L 443  
 "There is no God" the wicked saith, Cl 694  
 There is sweet music here that softer falls, T 472  
 There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier, T 464  
 There rolls the deep where grew the tree, T 512  
 There! said a stripling, pointing with meet pride, W 61  
 There's a palace in Florence the world knows well, RB 637  
 There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so purer than the purest, RB 602  
 There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away, B 187  
 There's not a nook within this solemn pass, W 60  
 There the voluptuous nightingales, Sh 315  
 There they are, my fifty men and women, RB 654  
 There was a boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs, W 13  
 There was a lady lived in a hall, M 838  
 There was a roaring in the wind all night, W 28  
 There was a sound of revelry by night, B 192  
 There was a time when meadow, grove and stream, W 39  
 There are the symbols, on that cloth of red, R 779  
 There were four of us about that bed, M 833  
 The sails flapped loose, the wind was still, R 788  
 The sea gives her shells to the shingle, Sw 879  
 The sea is at ebb, and the sound of her utmost word, Sw 903  
 The sea is awake, and the sound of the song of the joy of her waking is rolled, Sw 905  
 The sea is calm tonight, Ar 763  
 These little firs today are things, R 777

- The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow, Cl 702  
 The sky is changed! and such a change! of night, B 202  
 The sky is overcast, W 5  
 The soul's Rialto hath its merchandise, EBB 559  
 The spirit of the world, Ar 768  
 The splendor falls on castle walls, T 498  
 The stars are forth, the moon above the tops, B 231  
 The sun is warm, the sky is clear, Sh 296  
 The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains, T 540  
 The sun upon the Weirclaw Hill, Sc 164  
 The time draws near the birth of Christ, T 510  
 The tongue of England, that which myriads, L 454  
 The unremitting voice of nightly streams, W 63  
 The violet in the green-wood bower, Sc 108  
 The voice and the Peak, T 542  
 The voice of the spirits of air and of earth, Sh 330  
 The weltering London ways where children weep, R 812  
 The wish, that of the living whole, T 605  
 The word of the sun to the sky, Sw 892  
 The world is a bundle of hay, B 271  
 The world is too much with us; late and soon, W 50  
 The world's great age begins anew, Sh 367  
 The woods decay, the leaves decay and fall, T 535  
 The year's at the spring, RB 576  
 The year's twelve daughters had in turn gone by, L 450  
 They rose to where their sovran eagle sails, T 543  
 They say that hope is happiness, B 212  
 Thick rise the spear-shafts o'er the land, M 862  
 Thin are the night-skirts left behind, R 809  
 Think thou and act; tomorrow thou shalt die, R 803  
 This feast-day of the sun, his altar there, R 803  
 This is a spray the Bird clung to, RB 629  
 This is her picture as she was, R 776  
 This is that blessed Mary, pre-elect, R 778  
 This is the place. Even here the dauntless soul, R 811  
 This river does not see the naked sky, K 383  
 This truth came borne with bier and pall, T 507  
 This world is very odd we see, Cl 695  
 Thou art folded, thou art lying, Sh 336  
 Thou art speeding round the sun, Sh 336  
 Thou comest! all is said without a word, EBB 561  
 Thou earth, calm empire of a happy soul, Sh 337  
 Though God, as one that is an householder, R 804  
 Though the day of my destiny's over B 209  
 Thou goest, then, and leavest me behind, L 454  
 Thou hast thy calling to some palace-floor, EBB 555  
 Thou lovely and beloved, thou my love, R 797  
 Thou shalt have one God only; who, Cl 694  
 Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness, K 407  
 Those who have laid the harp aside, L 438  
 Three years she grew in sun and shower, W 15  
 Thrice three hundred thousand years, Sh 300  
 Through Alpine meadows soft-suffused, Ar 754  
 Through the black, rushing smoke-bursta, Ar 719  
 Through the great sinful streets of Naples as I passed, Cl 696  
 Through thick Arcadian woods a hunter went, M 843  
 Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums, T 498  
 Thy voice is on the rolling air, T 513  
 Tiber is beautiful too, and the orchard slopes, and the Arno, Cl 692  
 'Tis death! and peace indeed is here, Ar 761  
 'Tis done — but yesterday a King! B 184  
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise, T 511  
 'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock, C 82  
 'Tis time this heart should be unmoved, B 272  
 'Tis well; 'tis something, we may stand, T 502  
 Titan! to whose immortal eyes, B 213  
 To be a sweetness more desired than spring, R 801  
 Today death seems to me an infant child, R 807  
 To my ninth decade I have tottered on, L 458  
 To one who has been long in city pent, K 373  
 To spend uncounted years of pain, Cl 704  
 To the deep, to the deep, Sh 317  
 To the Lords of Convention, 'twas Claver's who spoke, Sc 165  
 Touch him ne'er so lightly, into song he broke, RB 680  
 Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men, W 32  
 To wear out heart and nerves and brain, Cl 705  
 Tranquility! thou better name, C 94  
 True-love, an thou be true, Sc 164  
 Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower the proud, T 524  
 'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead Ar 761  
 'Twas evening, though not sunset, and the tide, L 427  
 'Twas twilight and the sunless day went down, B 243  
 Twenty years hence my eyes may grow, L 442  
 Twist ye, twine ye, even so, Sc 162  
 'Twixt the sunlight and the shade, M 827

Twixt those twin worlds, — the world of  
sleep, which gave, R 812  
separate divided silences, R 799  
is diverse out of our human sight,  
899

Two seas are there; one is of the sea, W 50

Unfathomable sea: whose waves are years,  
Sh 357

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely heart, EBB  
555

Under the arch of Life, where love and  
death, R 804

Upon an eve I sat me down and wept, M 857

Upon a Sabbath-day it fell, K 404

Up, up, my friend, and quit your books, W  
9

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!  
W 45

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity, RB 609

Various the roads of life; in one, L 443

Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying, C 101

Verse-making was least of my virtues: I  
viewed with despair, RB 681

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over  
ad and sea, T 548

lords and ladies gay, Sc 113

is — what? RB 680

by her hand and shadowed by her  
hair, R 795

Warriors and chiefs! should the shaft or the  
sword, B 187

Wasted, weary, wherefore stay, Sc 162

Was that the landmark? What — the foolish  
well, R 802

Watch thou and fear; tomorrow thou shalt  
die, R 803

Water, for anguish of the solstice: nay, R  
779

We are in love's land today, Sw 878

We are what suns and winds and waters  
make us, L 429

Wearily, drearily, M 839

Weary of myself, and sick of asking, Ar 721

We cannot kindle when we will, Ar 721

We come from the mind, Sh 330

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair;  
thou art goodly, O Love, Sw 868

Welcome, old friend! These many years, L  
455

We leave the well-beloved place, T 510

We left behind the painted buoy, T 537

Well! if the bard was weather-wise, who  
made, C 94

Well I remember how you smiled, L 458

Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,  
C 70

We mind not how the sun in the mid-sky, L  
437

Were you with me, or I with you, Cl 702

We rode together, M 824

We talked with open heart, and tongue, W  
17

We were apart, yet day by day, Ar 756

We walked along, while bright and red, W 17

We were two daughters of one race, T 467

What a pretty tale you told me, RB 678

What can I give thee back, O liberal, EBB  
556

What dawn-pulse at the heart of heaven, or  
last, R 796

Whate'er you dream, with doubt possess,  
Cl 705

Whatever I have said or sung, T 512

What is gold worth, say, Sw 892

What is it to grow old? Ar 763

What is more gentle than a wind in summer?  
K 374

What is the buzzing in my ears? RB 666

What of her glass without her? The blank  
gray, R 800

What place so strange, — though unre-  
vealed snow, R 805

What secret thing of splendor or of shade,  
Sw 910

What sight so lured him thro' the fields he  
knew, T 553

What thing unto mine ear, R 789

What voice did on my spirit fall? Cl 693

What we, when face to face we see, Cl 699

What will it please you, my darling, here-  
after to be? Sw 901

What, you are stepping westward, W 38

Wheer 'asta bean saw long and mea liggin'  
ere aloan? T 538

When a man hath no freedom to fight for at  
home, B 271

When do I see thee most, beloved one?  
R 794

When first, descending from the moorlands  
W 61

When Helen first saw wrinkles in her face,  
L 430

When I have borne in memory what has  
tamed, W 33

When I have fears that I may cease to be,  
K 381

When Israel of the Lord beloved, Sc 164

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave, T 504

When on my bed the moonlight falls, T 506

When our two souls stand up erect and  
strong, EBB 559

When princely Hamilton's abode, Sc 111

When the buds began to burst, L 457

When the enemy is near thee, Cl 695

When the hounds of spring are on winter's  
traces, Sw 866

When the lamp is shattered, Sh 369

When we met first and loved, I did not build  
EBB 562

When vain desire at last and vain regret, R  
808

When we two parted, B 171

Where are the great whom thou would'st  
wish to praise thee? Cl 695

Where art thou, beloved Tomorrow, Sh 368

Where art thou gone, light-ankled youth?  
L 454

Where art thou, my beloved son, W 43

Where Claribel low-lieth, T 461

- Where lies the land to which the ship would  
go, Cl 701
- Where shall the lover rest, Sc 126
- Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,  
RB 618
- Whiles in the early winter eve, M 861
- Who is the happy warrior? who is he, W 47
- Who is your lady of love, O ye that pass, Sw  
884
- Who kill'd John Keats, B 271
- Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail,  
T 511
- Who prop, thou ask st, in these hard days,  
my mind? Ar 708
- Who shall contend with his lords, Sw 871
- Who, who from Dian's feast would be away?  
K 387
- Who will away to Athens with me? who, L  
444
- "Why?" Because all I haply can and do, RB  
682
- Why did you melt your waxen man, R 780
- "Why from the world" Ferishtah smiled,  
"should thanks," RB 682
- Why sit'st thou by that ruin'd hall, Sc 163
- Why weep ye by the tide, ladie, Sc 162
- Why, why repine, my pensive friend, L 440
- Why, William, on that old gray stone, W 8
- Why wilt thou cast the roses from thy hair?  
R 785
- Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet, T 509
- Will sprawl, now that the heat of day is  
best, RB 661
- Wisdom and spirit of the universe, W 12
- Wish no word unspoken, want no look away;  
RB 681
- With Farmer Allan at the farm abode, T 484
- With little here to do or see, W 35
- With rosy hand a little girl pressed down,  
L 442
- With sacrifice before the rising morn, W 51
- With Shakespeare's manhood at a boy's  
wild heart R 811
- With the same heart, I said, I'll answer thee,  
EBB 562
- With trembling fingers did we weave, T 503
- Witless alike of will and way divine, RB 668
- Woe, he went galloping into the war, RB 682
- Worlds on worlds are rolling ever, Sh 366
- Would a man 'scape the rod? RB 657
- Would that the structure brave, the mani-  
fold music I build, RB 657
- Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin, T 495
- Years, many parti-colored years, L 455
- Ye clouds! that far above me float and pause  
C 88
- Yes, call me by my pet-name! let me hear,  
EBB 562
- Yes! in the sea of life enisled, Ar 757
- Yes, it was the mountain echo, W 48
- Yes: I write verses now and then, L 441
- Yet love, mere love, is beautiful indeed, EBB  
557
- Ye who have passed Death's haggard hills,  
and ye, R 806
- You ask me why, tho' ill at ease, T 479
- You know, we French stormed Ratisbon, RB  
594
- You'll love me yet! and I can tarry, RB 588
- Your ghost will walk, you lover of trees, RB  
626
- Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,  
R 796
- You say, but with no touch of scorn, T 509
- You send me your love in a letter, Sw 900
- You smiled, you spoke, and I believed, L  
442
- Youth! thou wear'st to manhood now, So  
165





















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